Torres: Mayor's offices to see budget hike next fiscal year. PAGE 3
Mayor's office looking for new site for animal shelter. PAGE 6

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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3-hour fire burns Home & Plus

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

» Bush fire also raging at Wireless Ridge

A three-hour fire engulfed yesterday morning the Home & Plus Department Store in San Antonio, which has just opened for business last November.

No one was injured in the blaze that was reported to the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services at 6:28am, according to DFEMS spokesman Derek Gersonde.

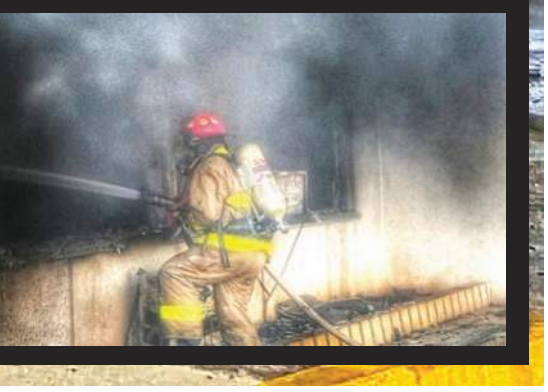
As this developed, a bush fire burned acres of vegetation at Wireless Ridge in Capital Hill on Sunday. DFEMS is expected to release details about the fire today, Tuesday.

The San Antonio fire snarled

See FIRE on Page 4

DEREK GERSONDE

Two firefighters approach the fire scene as thick black smoke covered the area during the three-hour blaze at Home & Plus Department Store in San Antonio yesterday morning. Inset, a firefighter sprays water on an area at the Home & Plus Department Store. The blaze was placed under control after three hours.



Japanese tour agents, families to visit Saipan starting April

By DENNIS B. CHAN
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REPORTER

Some 300 tour agents from Japan and their families are expected to fly to Saipan between April and June this year for a first-hand experience of Saipan as part of marketing efforts to rejuvenate the critical and fragile Japanese market in the CNMI, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres said yesterday.

Torres also said "cosmetic" improvements to infrastructure in Garapan, Saipan's tourist district, is eyed to address concerns of Japan tour agents and tourist.

Torres, who met with the Hotel Association of the Northern Marianas Islands yesterday to express his continued support of the Japanese market, said Delta Airlines will be

See JAPANESE on Page 4

Torres hints on another airline to service CNMI

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
frauleine_villanueva@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

» Visa waiver is 'critical'

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres has hinted on the possibility of another airline servicing the CNMI this year.

Aside from the Philippine Airlines which is coming back in June since halting their services in the '90s, Torres mentioned in an interview with the media last week that there is another airline that will be "coming in again."

"It is very critical to diversify our percentage of tourists. This is a great opportunity for tourism, now that we have PAL coming in June. That shows that CNMI is a tourist destination," Torres said, "When you have PAL taking the risk that means they have done their due diligence that the CNMI is the next destination."

Torres

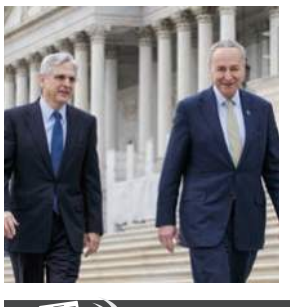
"And we have other airlines actually, that will be coming in again," he added.

He said that a ceremonial flight will happen around the third quarter of the year.

"I say there is another airline that

See TORRES on Page 4

INSIDE



NATION

From his first days at Harvard, Merrick Garland's classmates pegged him as a star.

» PAGE 14

WORLD

Syrian government forces recaptured the ancient city of Palmyra on Sunday.

» PAGE 16

LIFE & STYLE

"Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice" rebounded from a smack down from critics to debut with a massive $170.1 million in North America, the sixth best opening of all-time.

» PAGE 20

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Local

TO HEAR MOTION DECLARING BUDGET ACT UNCONSTITUTIONAL:

OAG says Superior Court lacks jurisdiction

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Superior Court has no jurisdiction to hear a motion to declare the 2016 Budget Act unconstitutional, according to the Office of the Attorney General yesterday.

Assistant attorney general David Lochabay also asserted that the plaintiffs, who filed such a request to declare, have no standing to assert the claims they made in the motion.

Lochabay said plaintiffs have no property right to payment of their judgments at any particular time, including through the 2016 budget.

"As they have no property right they have no constitutional protection and the constitutional claims fail," said Lochabay in the government's opposition to the motion to declare.

The government counsel said plaintiffs entered into stipulated judgments and any harm they suffered as a result is self-inflicted.

Attorney Michael W. Dotts, counsel for the parents of a baby who died during delivery in 2012 at the Commonwealth Health Center, has asked the Superior Court to declare the 2016 Budget Act unconstitutional.

Dotts said the Budget Act of 2016 is unconstitutionally unbalanced under the Commonwealth Constitution, Article 3, Section 9(a) because it did not provide for the payment of judgments in a reasonable amount.

Further, Dotts said, the 2016 Budget Act is unconstitutional under both the Commonwealth Constitution and the U.S. Constitution as violating both procedural due process and equal protection.

Dotts is counsel for Jotonia B. Aguon and Timothy Cruz, who are holding a $35,000 judgment against the government over the death of their child.

Dotts is also counsel for Gorjonny Camacho, who is holding a $10,000 judgment against the government in connection with his medical malpractice lawsuit.

Camacho went to CHC for an appendectomy, but the surgeon instead allegedly used permanent stitches instead of dissolving stitches.

As a result, a skin nodule developed on the site of the surgery, causing him pain and forcing him to undergo a second surgery to remove the skin nodule and remove his stitches.

Dotts brought up the issue of unbalanced 2016 budget in order to collect payments for court judgments against the government.

In the government's opposition filed yesterday, Lochabay said Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho has exceeded the court's jurisdiction by ordering a hearing on whether the government's 2016 budget should be held unconstitutional.

Lochabay said whatever the extent of the Superior Court's authority under the law, it certainly does not include finding the government's budget unconstitutional.

"There is no rational and substantial argument that could support the trial court's decision," he said.

Lochabay said plaintiffs do not have standing to bring this motion, as they have suffered no injury-in-fact, a requirement of standing.

Lochabay said plaintiffs requested judgments, not settlements.

"Plaintiffs could have had settlements had they so requested. Thus, any injury plaintiffs have is self-inflicted," he added.

Torres swears in new member to zoning board; re-nominates others

By DENNIS B. CHAN
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REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres swore in a new member to the Commonwealth Zoning Board.

Former lawmaker Mariano Taitano was sworn in during a ceremony yesterday in the Office of the Governor's conference room.

Torres said he looks forward to working with Taitano and the rest of the board members in addressing important zoning issues.

Torres also has re-nominated a couple members of the Zoning board to their posts.

In March 22 letters to the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation, Torres announced his re-appointment of board members Joe Erra Ayuyu Jr. and Diego Blanco.

In his letters, Torres said he is confident that Ayuyu and Blanco are qualified for the post and would continue to devote their time and efforts on this important board.

The re-appointments required SNILD confirmation.

If confirmed, Ayuyu and Blanco will serve another two-year term.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Former lawmaker Mariano Taitano was sworn in by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres as the newest member to the CNMI Zoning Board during a ceremony yesterday.

NEWBORN HEARING SCREENING PROGRAM

Babies learn from the time they are born. One of the ways they learn is through hearing. When a baby is born with hearing loss, many sounds and voices are not heard, and the child's speech and language development can be delayed. CHCC implemented newborn hearing as a standard of care and all babies get their hearing screened shortly after birth.

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Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation

Printing funded by the Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Grant under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Service Administration.

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Torres: Mayor's offices to see budget hikes next fiscal year

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres disclosed yesterday that CNMI mayor's offices would see an increase in their budgets for next fiscal year, suggesting at an overall growth in revenue projections.

Torres met with the island mayors of Saipan, Tinian, Rota, and Northern Island and gave them their budget proposals or figures yesterday, showing an increase in funding for all the mayors offices.

The governor said that based on projected figures from fiscal year 2016, the administration has increased the mayor's offices budgets for 2017.

"All of them were happy and all of them made a motion to adopt the proposed legislation to them," Torres told *Saipan Tribune* in an interview in his office late afternoon yesterday.

The shared figures come from a fiscal year budget proposal that the Governor's Office is crunching out ahead of official submission to the Legislature in the coming months.

Per CNMI law, the governor has to meet with the council of mayors prior to the budget submission to get their input. Yesterday's meeting began that process.

"This is actually the only thing that is done," Torres said of the budget proposals. "Everything else is fluid. But this is something that we have given to the mayor's offices."

Still, the Torres administration is optimistic and anticipates budget growth for next year that has the potential to be "double-digit forecasted revenue increases," *Saipan Tribune* learned.

The Saipan Mayor's Office will see a $209,000 increase from a budget last year of $1.8 million.

The Northern Island Mayor's Office will see a proposed increase to $505,000 budget from a $340,000 budget.

Rota Mayor's Office will see an increase to $6.7 million from $6.4 million.

From a current budget of $6.6 million, the Tinian Mayor's Office will see a proposed budget of $6.8 million.

Torres

Torres said he ensured the mayors of continued collaborative working environment focusing on "their needs" as they move forward.

"If they need an additional supplement…anything that needs emergency assistance my office is ready to work with them," Torres said. "And if there is a supplemental" budget information "coming in July, that is something we will sit down again" and discuss.

Torres added they would be setting up quarterly meetings to hash out issues that need to be worked on. Among other issues, Torres said they discussed the proposed military buildup on the islands of Tinian and Pagan, particularly a divert airfield on Tinian and the training range proposals on Pagan.

» Increases hint at overall growth in revenue

On Pagan, Torres said he would be pushing homesteads on island.

"I asked the mayor for his full support," Torres said, adding that the Northern Islands Mayor Jerome Aldan invited all the mayors and himself to join the forum, "Konferencian Dinana Islas Marianas" slated for Pagan this June.

CUC board passes motion to suspend disconnection fee

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
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REPORTER

The board of directors of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has passed a motion to suspend their disconnection fee for power consumers, following a law that was passed last December.

The board reconvened again yesterday following their scheduled public meeting last March 21 to continue executive session discussions as well as pass several motions.

The motion to "suspend disconnection of $15 subject to Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission's approval" was proposed by director Albert Taitano, and was seconded by director Joe Torres.

During the discussion, CUC legal counsel James Sirok stated that the disconnection fee is a CPUC-authorized fee and is part of their tariffs.

The law, Public Law 19-27, which was authored by Rep. Francis S. Taimanao (Ind-Saipan) and signed by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, stated that the removal of CUC's Disconnection Notice-Electric Fee of $15 will take effect upon approval by CPUC.

"But PUC has not had session for the last year and a half," Sirok said.

Aside from Taitano and Torres, board chair Adelina Roberto, vice chair Eric San Nicolas, and director Ignacio Perez also voted yes to the motion and it was carried.

According to Roberto, they have to follow the law.

"There's a law already passed that is going to remove it. We're going to follow that law and if CPUC says you cannot do that, then I guess the governor will have to do something about it," Roberto said.

"But we have to follow that law and it has already been in place," she added.

According to CPUC chair Joe Guerrero, the commission will also look into the law that was passed last December.

He noted that since the law has a clause that it needs CPUC approval, until they do so, CUC is still authorized to collect those fees.

Guerrero added, however, that CUC can choose to waive that fee if it will not have an impact on their revenue.

"When we authorize charges that means those are the maximum amount that they can collect," Guerrero said, "CUC can decide to waive it at anytime especially if it's not going to affect revenue."

Navy to conduct Training at W-517

ASAN, Guam—The Navy will conduct training at Warning Area 517 March 29-31 from noon to 8pm.

The general public—especially fishermen, commercial pilots, and marine tour operators—are advised to stay clear of the area during the dates and times indicated.

W-517 is an irregular shaped polygon comprising of 14,000 nautical square miles of airspace that begins south of Guam and extends south-southwest in international waters. W-517 supports surface and aerial gunnery, missiles, and laser exercises.

For more information, contact the Joint Region Marianas Public Affairs Office at (671) 349-4055. ***(PR)***

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MVA tests Beach Road pathway lights

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
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REPORTER

The Marianas Visitors Authority has tested some of the lights on the pathway along Beach Road as they target the repairs to be done later this year.

MVA outgoing managing director Perry Tenorio said that they tested some of the lights last week and it turned out to be very bright despite that only a generator was used to re-energize it.

They anticipate that it will be too bright when they connect it to the main switch.

The lights—which are coming from LED bulbs—were also "all over" the place as opposed to just lighting the pathway.

To resolve this, MVA has already ordered inserts to be put on the posts to direct the lights toward the ground. MVA said they are waiting for the shipment to arrive.

"The intention is to direct the light down," Tenorio said, "We need this particular reflector."

With the acceleration of the project, Tenorio said they might be able to reenergize the pathway earlier than expected.

» Other destination enhancement projects moving along

They initially scheduled the relighting in August.

"With the current progress that they're going, we're looking at an earlier reenergizing of the pathway," Tenorio said.

To mark the completion of project, MVA will hold an evening Ayuda Fun Run, which will support a local non-profit organization. The event is also part of MVA's 40th anniversary celebration projects.

The pathway snakes along Beach Road from the Minatchom Atdao Pavilion to American Memorial Park. Lights in a portion of Garapan Road near DFS to Middle Road are also included in the project.

There are currently no lights that function along the Beach Road Pathway.

The project includes inventory and repair or replacement of all walkway lights, lighting closets, and bollard lights which is projected to cost $684,000.

MVA funded the project in coordination with the Department of Public Works.

"That's part of the reason the board has chosen this to be the first project because I think it would add visual value in terms of the lagoon at night and it will also allow local people, the community, to use the pathway for what it was," Tenorio said.

Flower island project

The pathway lights project is among the largest destination enhancement project of MVA which also includes the complete renovation of Banzai Cliff and the Flower Island Project that seeks to rebrand the CNMI as a "Flower Island."

For the Flower Island project, MVA was waiting for requests for proposals for the landscaping services as well as architecture and engineering landscaping services for Paseo De Marianas and other areas in Garapan.

"Something that we're going to move on since we are ready, we're doing the design component of PDM, we'll try to get the second phase of Flower Island project which will be the Banzai Cliff area. And that's going to be quite significant," Tenorio said.

"One thing we need to do for that is we need to assess whether the lookout, where it's at right now, the bottom where we have that erosion, whether its strong enough to continue to maintain people walking on top of it especially with larger numbers. We're looking at 1.4 million people on an annual basis," he added.

FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON

Destination enhancement projects of the Marianas Visitors Authority are moving along as they expect to finish the reenergizing of the pathway lights along Beach Road. During their meeting last week, the board was provided updates regarding other larger projects of the tourism agency such as the Flower Island project that seeks to beautify Paseo De Marianas and Banzai Cliff.

JAPANESE

From Page 1

bringing in staff and family and will be accommodated in island hotels.

"They are going to do that that throughout the whole HANMI association to accommodate the Japanese tour agents" and "promote Saipan on a first-hand experience," Torres said, "so that when they go back to Japan they know exactly what to sell, how to sell it, and when tourists ask them about their experiences, they can actually relate to them."

Torres reiterated his call yesterday to diversify the CNMI's tourism market.

"30, 30, 30," Torres said, meaning target tourist market distributions of 30 percent Japanese, 30 percent Chinese, and 30 percent Korean.

Torres wants to support the "historical relationship" between Japan and the CNMI and support a "healthier environment" with a diversified tourism market.

"We expect to double [the market for tourism] in the next couple of years. Maybe two or three years," Torres said. "There is more than enough businesses for every tourist partnership."

Right now, the Japan market is critical and fragile and I wanted to assure HANMI, [the Marianas Visitors Authority], and the new executive director" Chris Concepcion they would "prioritize the Japanese market," he added.

Asked "how" they would sell Saipan to these tour agents, Torres said he personally would be present to assure the government's commitment. He also said his administration will commit to reprogram money for tourism and marketing efforts in Japan, among others.

Torres said another issue to address are the concerns of Japanese tourists and Japanese agents, which are exemplified in concerns about poor lighting in Garapan, and a call to establish one-way streets in Garapan to make traffic more accessible, on top of work on sidewalks and other infrastructure.

"There are some cosmetics that [tour agents] requested. We are moving in making that happen," Torres said. "I am listening to their needs, both long term and short term goals, and we want to show them [our Japanese partners] their priority.

HANMI is also concerned, Torres said, about the budget of the Marianas Visitors Authority, particularly how funds from hotel occupancy taxes meant for the tourism body gets reprogrammed to other government agencies.

"Over the years, they've seen this slashed and used elsewhere," Torres said.

Torres said he assured the association that they would get full support on their priorities whether it is the Japan market or tourist destination areas.

Torres said they want to explore using those funds accordingly.

The MVA, as the CNMI's tourism agency, receives funding from hotel occupancy tax earmarks and other sources.

FIRE

From Page 1

traffic for a couple of hours in the vicinity as thick black smoke covered both lanes of Beach Road.

"Due to complexity of the fuel source, the cause of the fire is still undetermined and pending further investigation by the Arson Investigation Unit," Gersonde said.

Home & Plus Department Store is located on the ground floor of the three-story commercial Afetnas Square Building, which used to hold the office of the CNMI Department of Labor and Immigration.

Witnesses told *Saipan Tribune* that no one was inside when the fire broke out as the store was closed at that time.

Gersonde said at 6:29am, firefighters and medics from Susupe, Koberville, Kagman, and Garapan Fire Stations responded.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority-Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighting assisted DFEMS firefighters with the use of their water tanker.

DKK Corp. and Saipan Ice also helped by providing 2,000 gallons and 1,500 gallons of water, respectively.

Gersonde said the fire was under control at 9:21am.

Gersonde said Arson Investigation Unit determined that the building is a three-story commercial building with multiple businesses.

Investigation showed that the fire's point of origin was from the northern portion of the building.

Heavy and moderate smoke and heat damage were found on the northern part of the building.

Firefighters were able to stop the spread of the fire by extinguishing the flames in the northern end of the department store.

Fire did not spread to AJ Poker Game located beside Home & Plus Department Store. Six commercial units, including one previously occupied by City Trust Bank, were converted to a big Home & Plus Department Store.

Ho Jin Yoon owns Home and Plus. He also owns San Jose Mart, 99 Cents Supermarket, and Payless Supermarket.

Saipan Tribune learned that Yoon leased the entire three-story building. Yoon is said to be relocating to the building his Payless Supermarket in Chalan Kanoa.

Last Feb. 13, fire of unknown cause broke out at one of the rooms of Capital Hotel in Garapan.

Last Feb. 11, a 3-year-old boy was injured during a fire that broke out at an apartment in Susupe.

Last Jan. 20, a car caught fire in front of Mount Carmel School in Chalan Kanoa, while another fire broke out at a shipping container at the old dumpsite in Puerto Rico.

TORRES

From Page 1

will be doing another ceremonial flight end of August or perhaps early September," Torres said.

Torres declined to give information on the airline or which country it will be originating from, adding that they are still finalizing some details.

"We're working on that finalization," Torres said.

Visa waiver

With PAL and the possibility of another airline coming in, Torres said it is important to retain the visa-waiver program.

"We got to maintain that and we're very fortunate," Torres said, noting that Hawaii and Guam doesn't have the same privilege as the CNMI.

"We are very privileged to have that and I continue to work with our Congressman Kilili (Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan) to emphasize how important it is for us to maintain that visa waiver," he added.

Torres said the waiver for Chinese tourists is "very critical" especially when looking at the percentage of tourists' arrivals in the CNMI and with the expectation that Chinese tourists will continue to increase and even triple in the next years.

Torres—who endorsed Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump who would later that week call for an end to the U.S. visa waiver program in the wake of terror attacks in Belgium—said that they are working on expanding the waiver program to other nationalities.

"We are cognizant about the importance of Philippines, for example. Now we're writing letters and trying to communicate with [the Department of] Homeland Security to also look into the visa waiver so there are other countries. As we move forward with tourism, we see which countries are more interested to have that relationship and that will build us so we can ask for visa waiver," Torres said.

Jehn makes it to USF dean's list

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Jehn Joyner finished the Fall semester of his freshman year at the University of San Francisco by acknowledging his academic excellence as he made it to the Dean's Honor Roll of the McLaren School of Management.

Dr. Peggy Takahashi, PhD, in a letter sent to Joyner last month, informed him of the news. The letter was also sent to his parents Dr. John Joyner and Yasuko Harada-Joyner, who received it just last week.

"Dean Elizabeth B. Davis and I wish to congratulate you on your notable academic performance, which has qualified you for the Dean's Honor Roll for the Fall 2015 semester," wrote Takahashi, the Undergraduate Programs Associate dean at McLaren's.

Joyner's USF cumulative and Fall 2015 semester grade point averages were the basis of his inclusion on the Dean's Honor Roll where the School of Management is recognizes the hard work, talent, and commitment to education of its students.

"Your Dean's List status will be noted on your transcript for the Fall 2015 semester within the coming weeks. Inclusion on the Dean's List is indeed an honor, and the faculty and staff of McLaren School of Management are very proud of you and your achievement," added Takahashi.

His father, Dr. Joyner who is an instructor at the Northern Marianas College, and mother Yasuko said that Jehn did not inform them immediately of the great news but chose to surprise them.

"We got the news more than one month after he received it. That's why when we called him he told us that 'going to USF has been a great decision of my life.' We're really proud of him since he manages to balance his time in sports and academics," said Dr. Joyner.

The younger Joyner, a Saipan International School graduate, is trying to earn a spot on the USF Dons' men's soccer team that plays in the West Coast Conference of the NCAA Division I. His GPA at SIS is near 4.0.

Before choosing USF, Dr. Joyner said that his son had four other universities considering him on their soccer team and one of them is the Saint Leo University in Florida that plays in the Sunshine State Conference of the NCAA Division II.

At USF, Dr. Joyner said, that Jehn was asked by the soccer coaches to form a school-wide organization that would unite the campus in supporting the team.

"His coaches has seen something in him that's why they gave him that task. We're proud that he grew up to be a mature individual," said Dr. Joyner.

Jehn, the younger brother of reigning Miss CNMI Jian Joyner, is also attending training camp with the CNMI men's national team in California.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Jehn Joyner manages to balance his academics with his goal of making it to the men's soccer team of University of San Francisco.

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Man arrested for axe, samurai attack

A man allegedly beat up his wife for not giving him money, chased her with an axe, and broke items at a Susupe restaurant using a samurai sword last week.

Gui Fang Lai, 42, was taken to Superior Court for bail hearing yesterday afternoon on charges of assault with a dangerous weapon, criminal mischief, assault and battery, assault, and disturbing the peace.

A $10,000 cash bail was initially imposed.

Police Detective Myron O. Laniyo stated in his report that when a police officer arrived at Good Day Restaurant at 11:31am last March 24, the officer observed broken wine bottles on the floor with its contents spilled.

The officer also observed one dining table was damaged and a TV screen hanging on the wall had a crack on the screen.

The victim had a bruised lip and scratches on the left hand and on the top of her left shoulder.

According to the victim, on March 20 at 11am, Lai asked $700 from her but she refused. He later asked the wife for $1,000, but she again refused. He asked later for $350, but the wife again denied it.

Lai got mad and pulled her hair, then swung a baby high chair at her, but she blocked it with her hands. He then slapped her on the mouth.

The victim ran out of the restaurant toward Joeten Susupe because he chased her with an axe.

The victim did not report the matter to the police until the following day, March 21, when Lai called her from the Department of Corrections after he was arrested for reckless driving.

Lai threatened he would kill anybody and break the store if she does not bail her out.

In the evening of March 23, as Lai and his wife were eating in the restaurant, Lai was asking her about another person.

Lai left then later came back with a sword and was swinging it left and right. She asked what's wrong, but he continued shouting.

He hit ceramics and glass cups on the table with the sword. She cried and begged him to stop.

Police arrived and arrested Lai, but inside the police car, he kicked the window of the police vehicle.

Police recovered the axe and samurai sword that he used in hitting the dishes and the food on the table. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

CIP PROGRAM OFFICE, OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

INVITATION TO BID
ITB16-GOV-089

San Vicente Basketball Court Facility and Amenities Rehabilitation
San Vicente Village, Saipan, MP

Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lieutenant Governor Victor B. Hocog are soliciting sealed bids for the Rehabilitation of the San Vicente Basketball Court Facility, Saipan Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The project package will be available Tuesday, March 29, 2016 at the Governor's Office, Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Administrator's Office, Juan A. Sablan Administration Building, Capitol Hill. A $50.00 non-refundable fee for the project package will be assessed. All interested bidders are required to include an Insurer Certification Clearance (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC should be obtained at the Department of Commerce, Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) on Capitol Hill.

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, as revised through May 24, 2001. Public Law 15-95 Local Preference Act, as amended by Public Law 15-118 does not apply to this Federally funded project. All wage rates for employees performing the work, labor and services on this project shall be paid at the current U.S. prevailing wage rates established for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

There will be a pre-bid conference/site visit for this project on Tuesday, April 05, 2016 10:00AM ChST at the project site, San Vicente Basketball Court. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 PM ChST, Thursday, April 07, 2016 to the CIP Office, Office of the Governor, Juan A. Sablan Administration Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, or faxed to (670) 664-2408. All responses to questions should be shared with other prospective contractors.

Sealed bids must be marked **"ITB16-GOV-089, San Vicente Basketball Court Facility and Amenities Rehabilitation".** For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than 9:00 AM ChST Tuesday, April 26, 2016. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to Bid. Notices of Intent to Bid must be received by the Director of Procurement & Supply no later than 9:00 AM ChST Teusday, April 26, 2016 and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than Tuesday, April 26, 2016 and must be received no later than Thursday, May 05, 2016 ChST. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, at 10:00 AM ChST Tuesday April 26, 2016. However, if notices of intent to bid are received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will opened at 10:00 AM ChST Thursday, May 05, 2016.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars ($25,000.00) a bid security of fifteen percent (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. Bid security shall be on a bid bond, in cash, by certified check, cashier's check or other form acceptable to the government. A surety company shall hold the certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: "Credit Account No. 44660". If a bid bond is submitted it must be accompanied by an Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC).

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 70-30.3-245. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than $25,000.00.

Prior to the execution of the contract, the selected contractor shall submit:

a) A current license from the bonding company showing that it has authority to issue bond in the CNMI, and

b) A certification from the bonding company that the unencumbered value of its assets (exclusive of all outstanding commitments on other bond obligations) exceeds the penal amount of each bond.

A contractor submitting an unacceptable payment or performance bond may be permitted a reasonable time, as determined by the P&S Director, to substitute an acceptable bond prior to executing a contract.

Acceptable assets are only:
1) Cash
2) US Government Securities
3) Stocks and Bonds traded on US Security Exchange
4) Real Property owned in fee simple in US; and
5) Irrevocable Letters of Credit

Performance time for completion of this project is sixty (60) calendar days upon issuance of Notice to Proceed. The daily amount of liquidated damages shall be greater of (i) one hundred dollars ($100.00) per day, or (ii) two percent (2%) of the contract price divided by sixty (60) calendar days, the contract time and will be accessed as delays beyond the established completion date.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not affect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

/s/_____
Ralph DLG. Torres, Governor
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

/s/_____
Herman S. Sablan, Director
Procurement and Supply, DOF

Mayor's office looking for new site for animal shelter

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Saipan Mayor's Office is on the lookout for a location where the new animal shelter would be built. The animal shelter in Lower Base was severely damaged by Typhoon Soudelor and was already condemned by the Department of Public Works-Building Safety Code Division.

Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang said DPW informed him that the building sustained structural damage and repair and other forms of restoration will no longer be needed. Special assistant to the Saipan Mayor Henry Hofschneider, in an interview with *Saipan Tribune* early this year, said it is most likely they would have to build a new animal shelter.

The animal shelter's tin roof, windows, and parts of the walls were all torn apart like paper when Typhoon Soudelor ripped through Saipan in August last year.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency and DPW has also identified the site in Lower Base, the location of the old animal shelter, as a flood-prone area. Apatang said they had already received federal grants from FEMA.

"We already have the money that was supposed to be used for renovation. But since DPW told us that it would no longer need fixing and FEMA identifying the place as a flood zone area, we're seeking permission and approval from FEMA to use the money to build a new facility," said Apatang.

He added that they had already asked the help of Vicky Villagomez, the Capital Improvement Projects special assistant for budget and management, in seeking FEMA's approval that they use the money intended for repairs to building a new facility.

He said that they have been closely coordinating with the office of Department of Public Lands Secretary Marianne Concepcion-Teregeyo in locating new public land where the animal shelter would be located.

"We are working to secure another land, one that is far from the community where the noise of the animals won't affect the lives and bother the neighbors. We all thought we could repair the facility at Lower Base but since FEMA and DPW identified the area as flood prone, we asked DPL's help in locating a new land," said Apatang.

"This would be one of our top priorities. Hopefully, we could get an answer and work something out by the end of the month."

Apatang said he is also thankful for the immediate response of Department of Lands and Natural Resources Secretary Richard B. Seman once they formally close the animal shelter. "Secretary Seman is also helping us by letting us to temporarily use their quarantine facility in As Perdido."

PROBE ASSISTANCE CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Tinian Mayor Joey P. San Nicolas, attorney Kimberlyn King-Hinds, and Department of Fire and Emergency Management Services Commissioner Clyde Norita during a meeting at the former's office. San Nicolas has asked for Norita's help in investigating allegations of overtime padding at the Tinian DFEMS.

Jealous man allegedly points, shoots common-law wife with air gun

A man was arrested last week for allegedly beating up his common-law wife he accused of having an affair with his relative and pointing and shooting an air gun rifle at her at their residence in As Gonno.

William Sablan Indalecio Jr., 27, was taken to Superior Court yesterday on charges of assault with a dangerous weapon, assault and battery, assault, criminal mischief, and disturbing the peace.

Associate Judge David A. Wiseman imposed a $10,000 cash bail and set the preliminary hearing for April 6 at 9am.

Assistant public defender Cindy Nesbit was appointed as counsel for the defendant. Assistant attorney general Betsy Weintraub appeared for the government.

Police Detective Peter A. Aldan stated in his report that the victim reported a domestic violence incident and requested to meet a police officer at the parking lot of Saint Jude Church in Koblerville on Wednesday at 6:35am.

When the officer arrived at the church, the officer noticed that the victim's hands were shaking, she appeared scared, and then started crying.

The victim told police that earlier that morning, Indalecio accused her of having an affair with his relative. She denied his allegations and covered herself with a blanket to sleep along with their two children—a 1-month infant and a little girl— inside her car at his farm.

Indalecio allegedly pulled her hair, choked her, and threatened he could plunge a knife in her stomach.

Their infant boy was awakened from all the yelling.

Indalecio sat back in the car and pointed an air gun rifle at her forehead when she told him she was leaving him because she's tired of being beaten up in front of their children.

After feeding the baby, the victim was going to step outside the car to make the infant burp. Indalecio told her to stay in the car and pointed the air gun rifle at her while uttering something.

Indalecio left and started shooting the air gun rifle into the jungle. After 15 minutes, he went back in the car and started apologizing and begging her not to leave him.

When she told him that she was moving her personal belongings to her mother's house, the defendant choked her again.

He then pointed the air gun rifle at her when she told him she was going to her mother's house then drop the children to school.

Two weeks ago, Indalecio allegedly choked the victim and grabbed her left inner thigh, and squeezed it, causing a bruise.

As they argued later, he grabbed her arms and squeezed them hard, then ripped her shirt in half. He then apologized. She sustained bruises on the arms and hands.

The victim told police that when she was eight months pregnant with their son, Indalecio shot her with air gun rifle while she was leaving in her car. Of the three shots fired, two struck the driver's door and one struck the left passenger door. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Apatang asks military to join LibDay parade

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang is asking the Military Liaison and Veterans Affairs Office to help them in securing a commitment from the military to join the Liberation Day parade this year. Saipan is celebrating the 71st commemoration of the island's liberation under Japanese rule during World War II.

Apatang made the request to Military Liaison and Veterans Affairs Office executive director Gregorio Sablan Jr.

Apatang, who also served in the US Armed Forces, said Sablan would help them in inviting the military to be part of the parade on July 4, a Monday. He added that there are already 17 soldiers in the CNMI who have committed to march in the Liberation Day parade.

"It would be nice if the Guam National Guard marching band could join the parade since we are also promoting to have our own National Guard. And some of our own are also serving in the Guam National Guard," said Apatang.

They are also waiting for the approval from high-ranking U.S. military officials to allow them to have some equipment to be used for the parade.

"We are still ongoing with the preparations for the Liberation Day festival. There are still a lot of things needed to be done," added Apatang.

The Liberation Day committee and the Saipan Mayor's Office are still trying to secure lowboys from construction companies that will be used for floats in the parade.

Skywalker Communications Group is working on the entertainment side of the Liberation Day Festival where they are preparing the line up and schedule of performers for the month-long celebration.

The committee is also suggesting that the carnival grounds for the 2016 Liberation Day be open until 10m on weekdays and 11pm every weekends.

The carnival is set to open on June 10 where the committee has also opened up the concession of operating carnival rides to any group or individual. The committee, at first, decided to scrap the carnival rides.

The 2016 Liberation Day has "Our Islands, Our Heritage" as its slogan.

Triskelion partners with BSI for Good Friday Mt. Tapuchao trek

This year's annual Good Friday Mt. Tapuchao trek made a difference for Triskelion Grand Fraternity's ongoing civic engagement.

On its fourth year volunteer work at the Good Friday event, the fraternity also known as Tau Gamma Phi, partnered with Best Sunshine International, Ltd., the largest private employer in the Commonwealth.

"This is our fourth year to volunteer on Good Friday. This year, there are about 50 members and most of them are employed by Best Sunshine International," explains council president Vince Sablan, himself a BSI cage supervisor. The fraternity has been volunteering for the annual Good Friday trek for several years now.

"We always look forward to participating in this event because we know that many people will be present and we want to help the community in any way that we can," he said.

On Saipan, Triskelion Grand Fraternity was established nine years ago.

When asked what his goal is as this year's council president, he said, "I want to get rid of the fraternity group stereotype. Most people would automatically assume that we do bad things, as soon as they hear the word 'fraternity.' I want to show the community that it's not like that with our group. Our goal is to serve and do good for the people through projects and missions like this."

By partnering with BSI, Sablan explained that the funds donated to their group allowed them to procure everything the group needed for their volunteer work at the annual trek. They were able to purchase about 1,000 bottles of water, boxes of nutrition bar, and set up a mini soup kitchen that were provided for free to Mt. Tapuchao pilgrims.

"We all know how much of a struggle this hike can be and how tiring it can get so we welcomed anyone who came by our booth to take whatever they need," Sablan noted. "Without Best Sunshine, our group wouldn't have a successful Good Friday activity for the community."

He added, "Thank you for helping to make my first project as council president a success. We're glad we turned to Best Sunshine for help." (*PR*)

Jewell to make first official visit to US Virgin Islands

WASHINGTON—U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell will make her first official visit to the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) on March 30-31.

Joined by Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Esther Kia'aina, Jewell will meet with Gov. Kenneth Mapp, deliver keynote remarks at the 99th Transfer Day Ceremony and join the Executive Committee of the USVI Climate Change Council to discuss how the Administration is working with island communities to prepare and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Jewell

Jewell will also visit the Virgin Islands National Park in St. John to make an announcement about the President's Every Kid in a Park initiative with local fourth graders from the Julius E. Sprauve School. The initiative is part of an overall strategy to connect young people to the outdoors, allowing fourth graders to go to www.everykidinapark.gov to obtain a pass for free entry for them and their families to more than 2,000 federally managed lands and waters nationwide for an entire year, including all federally managed parks in the territory.

On March 31, Jewell will join Island leaders and community members in St. Croix to deliver keynote remarks at the 99th Anniversary of Transfer Day—when the United States purchased the Virgin Islands from Denmark—and participate in a naturalization ceremony to welcome 50 new American citizens. After the ceremony, Secretary Jewell and Governor Mapp will host a joint press conference.

The Department of the Interior, through the Office of Insular Areas, is responsible for coordinating federal policy with the U.S. Virgin Islands, the territories of American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The Office of Insular Affairs' mission is to foster economic opportunities, promote government efficiency, and improve the quality of life for the people of the insular areas. ***(PR)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Judiciary Administrative Office
Guma' Hustisia · Iimwal Aweewe · House of Justice
P.O. Box 502165 · Saipan MP 96950
T: (670) 236-9715 · F: (670) 236-9702

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Judiciary is seeking a highly motivated individual for the position of:

CASELOAD COORDINATOR / TREATMENT PROFESSIONAL

DUTIES: The successful candidate will work under the Drug Court Judge in the Superior Court on Saipan which is responsible for overall planning, management oversight and daily operations of the Drug Court. The duties of this position include, but are not limited to the following:

- Interviews clients and other appropriate persons to obtain information and make preliminary assessment of cases in order to make proper referrals;
- Prepares social studies, case histories, reports and evaluations concerning information secured and services rendered;
- Manages the implementation and administration of Drug Court treatment programs for the Division of Community Control;
- Counsels substance abuse individual, group counseling, family counseling, and evaluation screenings for potential participants in Drug Court programs;
- Maintains knowledge of the judicial system and its interrelationship in court-referred inmates;
- Provides managerial direction to professional staff engaged in the operation of Drug Court treatment services;
- Participates in the selection, summarization, and presentation of case data from a variety of sources for casework planning, supervisory conferences, and consultations;
- Coordinates all court related referrals through judicial system, attorney general's office and public defender;
- Conducts program needs assessment and submits requests for capital expenditures, staffing, and program enhancements where indicated;
- Develops, coordinates and monitors record keeping systems for effective program evaluation;
- Promotes and organizes community support for agency criminal justice/substance abuse programs through lectures, training and meetings;
- Maintains liaison and confers with public officials, agency representative, and other professional persons regarding specific cases; interprets and provides public information regarding agency program objectives and activities;
- Develops and administers all reporting profiles for funding agencies;
- Assists in the preparation and maintains program annual budget, and grant support activities;
- Develops and administers all reporting profiles for judicial purposes; and
- Performs other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS: Candidate must have a high school diploma or equivalent and graduate from a recognized College or University in Behavioral Science. Minimum three (3) years supervisory and administrative experience in the administration of a licensed criminal justice/substance abuse/mental health treatment center; experience should include participation in the development and implementation of regulated treatment programs; or an equivalent combination of education, training, and experience.

COMPENSATION AND TENURE: This position is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the Presiding Judge. Salary will be $50,000 annually.

INTERESTED PERSONS may obtain application forms at the OPM offices in the CNMI, at the Judiciary Administrative Office at the Guma Hustisia/Iimwal Aweewe/House of Justice in Susupe, or at the Superior Court offices on Tinian and Rota. Completed applications, cover letter, and three references should be submitted to:

Human Resources
Guma Hustisia/Iimwal Aweewe/House of Justice
P.O. Box 502165
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel. (670)236-9818
Fax. (670) 236-9702
michelle.guerrero@justice.gov.mp

This internal job announcement will remain open until filled. Also, this job announcement can be seen and a printable copy of the application downloaded at http://www.justice.gov.mp.

THE CNMI JUDICIARY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER.

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Judiciary is seeking a highly motivated individual for the position of:

CERTIFIED CASE WORKER I

DUTIES: The successful candidate will work under the Caseload Coordinator / Treatment Professional in the Drug Court Division on Saipan which is responsible for drug court assessments and conducting therapeutic/educational/substance abuse treatment groups with drug court participants. The duties of this position include, but are not limited to the following:

- Conducts program/phase orientation and inform participants of legal requirements and implications concerning treatment;
- Assesses and establish treatment plan for participants;
- Keeps track of drug tests, group attendance, individual counseling attendance, outside groups (AA, NA, CA);
- Provides clinical case management;
- Conducts individual, family and group therapeutic/educational/substance abuse treatment sessions/and crisis intervention;
- Conducts discharge planning and provide referrals for continuing treatment;
- Provides follow-up contact as needed;
- Communicates with probation officer to secure resources for participants status updates of participants;
- Maintains files, records legal and case documentation in accordance with established regulatory policies and procedure;
- Attends staff meetings, in-service training, workshops, and interagency conferences to coordinate services; and
- Performs other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS: Candidate must have a high school diploma or equivalent and have obtained a bachelors degree from a recognized college or university in Social Work, Psychology, Sociology, or closely related field. Have three (3) years experience as a counselor in substance abuse treatment programs. Any equivalent combination of experience and training which provides the minimum knowledge, abilities and skills required for the position.

COMPENSATION AND TENURE: This position is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the Presiding Judge. Salary will be $40,000 annually.

INTERESTED PERSONS may obtain application forms at the OPM offices in the CNMI, at the Judiciary Administrative Office at the Guma Hustisia/Iimwal Aweewe/House of Justice in Susupe, or at the Superior Court offices on Tinian and Rota. Completed applications, cover letter, and three references should be submitted to:

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THE CNMI JUDICIARY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER.

All set for Flame Tree Arts Festival this April

The Flame Tree Arts Festival celebrates the rich art and cultural heritage of the CNMI and takes place in late April during the blossoming of flame tree flowers after which the event was named. The Flame Tree is the CNMI's official tree.

The Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture in conjunction with KKMP foundation and KKMP radio and CHCC-CGC and the CNMI Public School System is getting ready for the upcoming Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival. The event, scheduled for April 14-17 at the Civic Center Park in Susupe, marks the 35th anniversary of the CNMI's biggest and longest running annual festival. The CCAC has stepped back this year so they can concentrate on preparations for the Festival of the Pacific which is slated for May 22- June 6 of this year.

The annual festival features a wide selection of artwork from Saipan, Tinian, Rota, Guam, and from around the region. The event also showcases presentations by local and guest performing groups and musicians, art demonstrations, and an array of festival food favorites.

The festival is held to promote, perpetuate, and preserve the knowledge and skills of our gifted artists and provides a venue in which they can demonstrate and exhibit their magnificent arts and crafts for the entire world to behold.

The Bridge Capital art competition has $12,500 in prizes this year and rules and Registration for the BC completion can be found at www.bccnmi.com/artcontest.

The cost of registration for the festival has been lowered, as our artist and vendors are still in recovery from Typhoon Soudelor and Champi. The fee for registered artists is $50 for a 10x20 tent space and food vendors will register for $600 for a 20'x20' space. Schools will be accorded space to display and sell their art pieces for free. Only art pieces and goods manufactured in the CNMI will be allowed on the festival grounds. Any artist selling imported goods will be asked to leave the venue. Art pieces from around Micronesia are exempted.

There will be 50 booth spaces available for artists and 20 for food vendors. There will 12 exhibit areas to support Environmental awareness month, Autism awareness month, Underage drinking awareness month, Early Childhood and Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month, Chamorro and Carolinian Heritage month, and Sexual Assault Awareness month.

The festival will also feature testimonies from the alcohol and drug recovery program under CHCC-CGC. The goal being to seize the opportunity of bringing awareness of the social harms which plagues our community and bind together to find solutions to abolish these social ills from our community.

Check us out at www.flametreefestival.com or to register please email flametreefestival@gmail.com, call 670.233-1440 or stop by KKMP radio located at the Cabrera Center on Beach road.

We have sent out several sponsorship solicitation letters and to date, Flame Tree Arts Festival confirmed sponsors are CHCC-Community Guidance Center-Prevention Services, Bank of Guam, Best Sunshine International, Ltd., DPS-Passenger Safety, DPS-Highway Safety, DPS-Boating Safety, and DCCA-Division of Youth Services. ***(PR)***

Two-day Women's Summit to start Wednesday

The two-day Women's Summit is set to take place on Wednesday, March 30, to Thursday, March 31, 2016 at the Kanoa Resort.

At the culmination of a month in which men and women across the CNMI have celebrated the advancement, achievement, and contributions of women across the Commonwealth, the CNMI Women's Association is paying tribute to the critical role women play in raising public awareness of the many roles they play in developing the CNMI.

The 3rd Annual Women's Summit: "Pledge For Parity: Why Women? Why Now? Why You?" will bring together leaders from the public and private sector and a variety of other fields—all of whom believe in the power of active engagement, education and gender parity to support the success and advancement of women both personally and professionally. "Through their experience and insights, the Summit aims to reinforce the influence of women as they continue to contribute to social, economic, cultural and political achievement," said Jacqueline Che, Women's Summit chairperson.

For the first time, the Women's Summit will welcome a delegation of women from the islands of Tinian and Rota to Saipan for the two-day event. "Because of the demand, we have extended the registration period to Tuesday, March 28 in order to allow for more attendees," adds Erna Ngirchongor, overall chair of the 2016 Women's Month.

Seating is capped at 175 and those interested are encouraged to register for the Women's Summit no later than Tuesday, March 28, 2016 at noon by visiting www.cnmiwomen.org, contacting Patricia Mareham, CWA Case Worker, at 233-8978 Monday to Friday 1pm-5pm or by email p.mareham@cnmiwomen.org.

The CNMI Women's Association is funded by the Community Services Block Grant funds from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs-Department of Youth Services. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Front from left, Lars Wolf, Oceana Teigita, Issa Teigita, Tinalyn Litulumar, Dylan Jacolbe, and Dwayne Tabhan. Middle from left, Psa Lle Medina, Lyann DelaCruz, Latisha DeJesus, MerryAnn Viesca, Evon Mallari, and Aurvy Jacolbe. Back, Oleai Elementary School principal Jasylene Parico, DeeJay Santomin, Jia Ross Nicdao, Krislaine Cabanas, Ingrid Mallari, OES PGFC coach E. Agulto pose for a group photo.

Oleai Elementary School hails PGFC winners

Over 60 students gathered at Grace Christian Academy last March 19 for the Primary Grade Forensic Conference regional competition, which commenced at 9am the morning and ended at about 3pm in the afternoon.

Oleai Elementary School was one of the schools who sent delegates to the tilt and is proud to proclaim that a number of them placed in the regionals.

K-2 Division:

- Dwayne Tabhan - 4th Place, Readers Forum

3-5 Division:

- Psa Lle Median - 1st Place, Readers Forum
- Lars Wolf - 1st Place, Humorous Interpretation
- Oceana Teigita - 1st Place, Carolinian Readers Forum
- Issa Teigita - 2nd Place, Carolinian Readers Forum
- Tinalyn Litulumar - 3rd Place, Carolinian Readers Forum
- Dylan Jacolbe - 4th Place, Readers Forum

The management of Oleai Elementary School congratulates all the winners and participants of the PGFC. It also extends its gratitude to the coaches, organizers, and judges of the event. ***(PR)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

IT&E reminds agencies to 1st request cable site for excavation

In light of the additional cable cuts and damage to the phone pedestals caused by various agencies and private businesses which have caused service outages for IT&E's valuable customers, IT&E would like to remind anyone who plans to dig or excavate on or near any roads in the CNMI that they must request a cable location 24 hours prior to performing any such excavation work.

Cable locations can be requested by calling 611 at any time. IT&E will schedule a team member to mark the location of our cable at no cost.

Failure to request a cable location or damaging IT&E's cable or facilities will not only cause service interruptions but also result in charges for the full repair of the IT&E facilities.

IT&E thanks the involved entities in advance for their understanding and cooperation with this notice. ***(PR)***

NMPASI to close March 30-April 3

Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy System, Inc. will be closed from March 30 to April 3. NMPASI said it will resume regular office hours on April 4 at 8am.

NMPASI is a non-profit organization located in the heart of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and specializes in providing legal, personal, and occupational assistance to those with disabilities. ***(PR)***

Emergency water services interruption for Koblerville

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. customers in Koblerville are currently experiencing an emergency water service interruption due to another leak on the 4-inch water main located at the discharged site of the Koblerville booster pump station.

The call center received numerous trouble calls reporting that there was a water leak in the Koblerville area. Water Operations Personnel were informed and repairs were initiated this morning. Repairs are anticipated to be completed later today and customers in the affected area should expect restoration of services at 6pm.

For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor our facebook page for the latest updates (http://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation/). ***(PR)***

Advocates to file suit for Guam WWII survivors

TAMUNING, Guam—After decades of frustrating efforts to provide Guam's World War II survivors the honor and recognition they deserve, a group of advocates have decided to take the matter to court. In a press conference to announce the endeavor, Sen. Frank F. Blas, Jr. stated, "We're losing members of our island's greatest generation on an almost daily basis. So instead of continuing to hope that the United States government will one day recognize the pain and suffering they endured during WWII, we have collectively decided to sue the federal government for the reparations that they truly deserve."

Blas, along with several members of the group, held a press conference yesterday to detail their decision for the suit and further announce their formation of an advocacy organization that will represent the still-living survivors in the suit.

"Over a year ago, Senator Tony Ada, Senator Jim Espaldon, former U.S. Department of Justice Special Counsel Juan Carlos Benitez and I got together and began talking about our shared disappointment in how President Obama and the U.S. Congress have ignored Guam's war claims. It was through these discussions that it was learned that the person who chaired the Guam War Claims Review Commission in 2003, Attorney Mauricio J. Tamargo, was just as disappointed and wanted justice for the survivors as well. We then reached out to key members of our community and asked them to join us in possibly filing a lawsuit on behalf of the survivors."

Blas went on to state that in the months that ensued, their group expanded to include his father, former lieutenant governor Frank Blas, former governor Joseph Ada, former speaker Joe T. San Agustin, Lt. Gov. Ray Tenorio, Mr. James Castro (Researcher), Senate vice speaker BJ Cruz, Sen. Tina Rose Muna Barnes, Democratic Party chair Joaquin Perez, radio personality Ray Gibson, attorney Rossi Tolentino, and former Interior assistant secretary Anthony Babauta.

Blas states, "In 1945, the U.S. Congress passed the Guam Meritorious Claims Act to address the suffering, loss of life and loss of property experienced by the people of Guam during the enemy occupation of WWII. While minimal claims were addressed then, a 1947 study conducted by a group led by Ernest M. Hopkins revealed numerous deficiencies in the implementation of the Act. Decades later, the Guam War Claims Review Commission published their findings with the conclusion that Guam's WWII survivors deserved much better than what they were offered and what very few received."

Sen. Jim Espaldon added, "The biggest concern that members of Congress have stated they had with providing reparations to our survivors was the precedence it would set, and that others may follow. Well, very recently we have seen that the Congress and the President have provided funding for programs specifically for Holocaust survivors and reparations to the tune of $4 million each for Americans who were held hostage in Iran in 1979. Then what you can characterize as the straw that broke the camel's back was President Obama's urging and role with Japan and South Korea's reconciliation with regard to their long-standing WWII comfort women issue. So if the concern is precedence setting, it's already been done."

The group is in the final stages of forming as a non-profit organization to be known as the Guam World War II Reparations Advocates, Inc. The initial directors of the organization are Blas, Espaldon, former governor Ada, former speaker San Agustin, vices speaker Cruz, Muna Barnes, and former assistant secretary Babauta.

The attorneys that will represent the group in the impending suit are Washington, D.C.-based Attorneys Mauricio J. Tamargo, Jason Poblete, and Jeremy G. Ibrahim. The suit will be filed in Washington, D.C. and all court costs, attorneys fees and all other related expenses will be privately funded.

According to Senator Tony Ada, the group will focus its funding efforts for the lawsuit through donations and fund-raising events. Senator Ada stated, "one of the reasons for our formation of the non-profit organization is to raise the capital necessary to pursue the suit. We've begun the process of receiving financial commitments from various members of our community who believe, like we do, that time is quickly passing for our survivors and their recognition is long overdue."

Muna Barnes added, "It pains me every time I hear or read about the passing of another war survivor. One has to wonder if members of Congress and the President are waiting until they're all gone. I'm proud to say that our group won't wait for that to happen."

Tony Babauta summarized the press conference by stating, "Guam's *Man'amko* endured the greatest suffering during our island's occupation by Japanese forces in World War II. Their painful stories are remembered by their families and our people just as much as our island remembers that they were never made whole by the United States as others were after World War II."

Babauta further stated, "this effort does not dismiss Congress from providing parity through legislation to our survivors and it should be seen as an important avenue to explore. We are hopeful that the courts will agree that an injustice has been committed against those who suffered through Guam's occupation and will order that parity be restored to those who continue to be burdened by the memories of wartime atrocities."

Tamargo, vice speaker Cruz, and the late speaker Antonio R. Unpingco were members of the 2003 Guam War Claims Review Commission. During that same time, Tamargo was also the chairman of the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission of the United States.

The Guam War Claims Review Commission report can be accessed through the following link: https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/migrated/oia/press/2003/upload/guamwcrcreport.doc

For additional information, you can contact any of the individuals mentioned in this release, or you can contact Blas at 687-1483. ***(PR)***

Bordallo supports lawsuit for war reparations

HAGÅTÑA, Guam—Congresswoman Madeleine Z. Bordallo released the following statement on the announcement made by Senator Frank Blas Jr. to sue the federal government for war reparations.

"I continue to support any effort to resolve the issue of war claims for our *man'amko* who endured suffering of the occupation during World War II. Though I have been successful in passing Guam War Claims legislation five times in the House, our efforts have faced significant opposition from conservatives in the Senate. As I stated in my Congressional Address, I welcome and support any effort to resolve war claims through a federal lawsuit. I commend Senator Blas and the bi-partisan group he's assembled for leading this effort and offer my support to their efforts. However, I will not cease in my determination in doing all that I can to move this issue forward in Congress despite the persistent opposition. That is why I have reintroduced H.R. 44, the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act because resolving war claims for the survivors of the occupation is the right thing to do and I hope that we are able to accomplish this goal by any means necessary." ***(PR)***

Bordallo

UOG receives clean audit and low-risk auditee status

University of Guam's FY 2015 audit showed a financially stable organization with record levels of student enrollment and credit hour production. Auditors Deloitte & Touche gave the university a clean (unqualified) audit opinion on the financial statements. There were no material weaknesses and no compliance findings in conjunction with the audit. UOG was declared a low-risk auditee before the beginning of the audit and has now completed one audit as a low-risk auditee. Revenues were $95 million for the year which is a 4-percent increase from the prior year due largely to an increased appropriation from the government of Guam.

» Financially stable university achieves record enrollment

"We are focused on our mission and role in the social, economic and political development of our region," said UOG president Dr. Robert Underwood. "The University of Guam obtained the $6M EPSCoR grant which is driving an increase in research at our institution. The Cancer Grant is focused on health disparities and our scientists are engaged in research that will have an impact not only regionally but globally."

Senior vice president Dr. Anita Borja Enriquez added, "The significant number of grants managed by the university allow our students to engage in research at the undergraduate and graduate level. This translates directly into opportunities for students; another reason why the university is the natural choice for our community and the region."

UOG conferred a record number of 550 undergraduate and graduate degrees in academic year 2014-15 and enrollment for Fall 2015 achieved a record of 3,991 students. Including Fall 2015 graduates, Triton alumni now number over 16,000. "Our alumni add tremendous value to the professional backbone, service, and leadership of our island, the region, and beyond," said Enriquez.

Other FY 2015 audit highlights include:

The total amount received from the government of Guam increased $2.7 million from $35.3 million for Fiscal Year 2014 to $38 million for Fiscal Year 2015.

UOG managed 112 grants and contracts amounting to $35.5 million. They include awards for student financial aid, developmental disabilities, cancer research, alternative energy, green projects and building renovation.

Operating expenses decreased by $3.7 million from FY14. The decrease is the result of tight budget management and decreased electrical costs.

"Record enrollment, a record number of students earning their degrees, financial stability, low-risk auditee status, and an increase in federal grants, along with an increase in research opportunities for students, underscore the achievements made across the entire campus," added Underwood. "These achievements will create a stronger community."

The university reported a $9.2 million increase in net position up from $6.8 million in the prior year on a restated basis. The increases were driven largely by the implementation of GASB No. 68 which allowed some retirement expenses to be deferred. Apart from the impact of GASB No. 68, the increase in net position would have been slightly positive. ***(PR)***

RAFAEL TURNS 7 CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Rafael Pascual celebrated his 7th birthday with a party at Kanoa Resort last Saturday. Photo shows Rafael, right, with parents Doreen and Mike and little brother Raven.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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EDITORIAL

Confounding Pluto: New photos of a dwarf planet fan speculation

The New Horizon spacecraft has definitely given humanity new perspectives on Pluto. Last July, the NASA spacecraft got as close as any object from Earth to a world once regarded as a planet, then unceremoniously demoted because of un-planet-like behavior. During the Lunar and Planetary conference in Texas this week, NASA unveiled many of the images that New Horizon beamed back to Earth last year.

Far from being the frozen sphere of ice that many imagined it was, Pluto is revealed in these photos as a world with a number of stunning topographical features. New Horizon photographed mountain ranges, icy plains and the outline of what scientists believe was once a massive lake, judging by dendritic features carved into the ice. These tantalizing signs that a liquid of some kind once flowed on Pluto's surface has created speculation about the possibility of underground lakes.

Still, the water that once flowed on Pluto, when it had a much denser atmosphere, was likely composed of nitrogen. The surface of the sphere is minus 340 degrees Fahrenheit and all the ice that is there now is made of frozen nitrogen, methane and carbon monoxide.

Because of Pluto's peculiar tilt toward the sun, it is said to have a tropical region and an arctic region, though the temperatures for both are far colder than such places on Earth.

One of New Horizon's most intriguing discoveries is a vaguely heart-shaped region on the surface now called Tombaugh Regio. It was named for Clyde Tombaugh, the man who discovered Pluto in February 1930. Tombaugh would be pleased to see that his little world, now officially classified as a dwarf planet, continues to fascinate humans in ways that some full-fledged planets don't.

New Horizon gave NASA enough data to study for years, but if the preliminary photos are any indication of what's to come, Pluto is always going to confound expectations.

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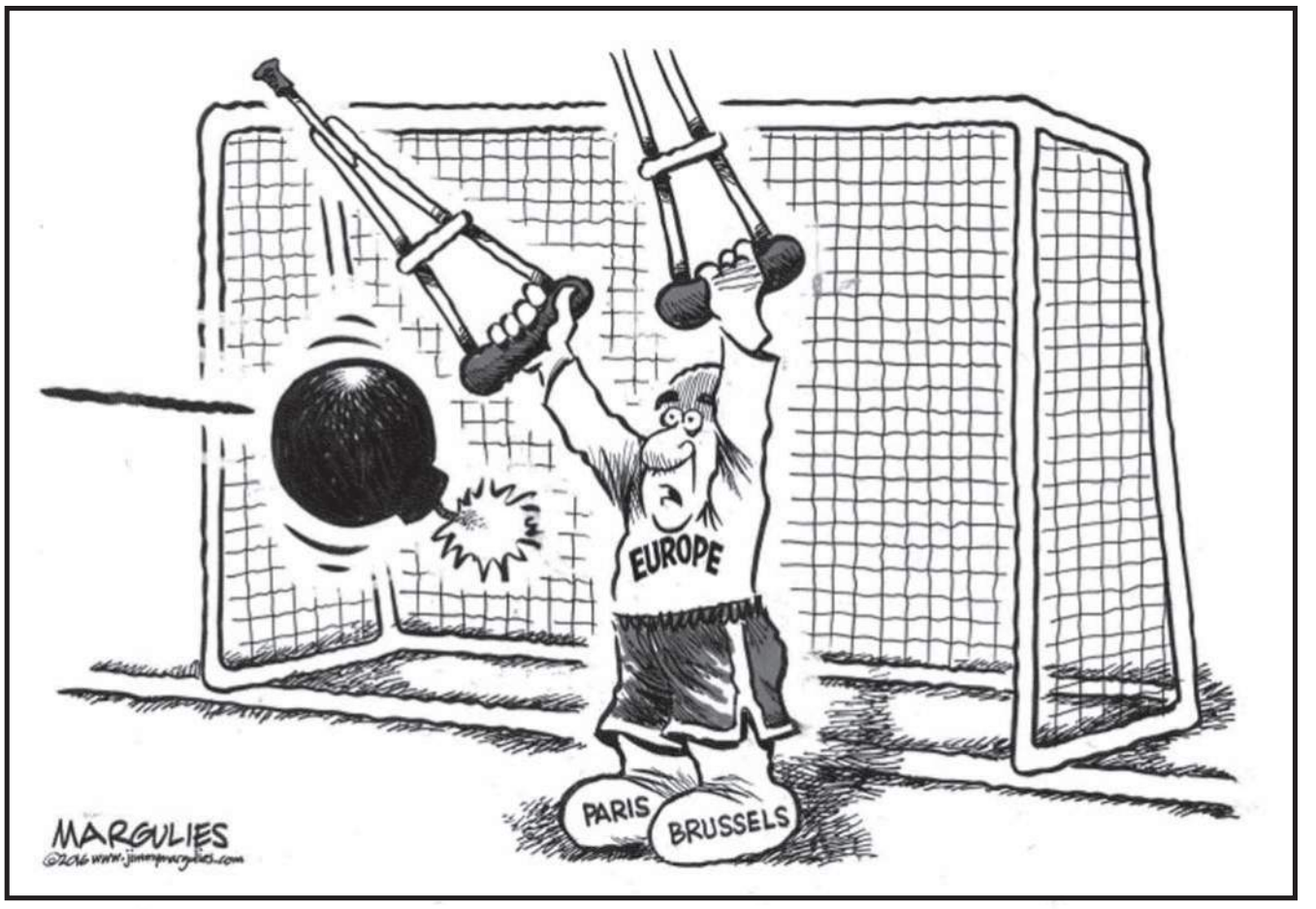

WiDA people

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime Vergara previously taught at SVES in the CNMI. A peripatetic pedagogue, he last taught in China but makes Honolulu, Shenyang, and Saipan home. He can be reached at pinoypanda2031@aol.com. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the Saipan Tribune.

In the late '70s, I visited a colleague attending Madison's University of Wisconsin to do graduate studies on law. In one of my commutes from Chicago where our international center was located to Saskatoon in Canada where I lived, I paid her a visit, not just because she and her husband were friends, but because the university was a hotbed of student activism.

Having fallen into the bureaucratic role of structural change, I've turned into a half-dead functionary. I am recovering the raw passion of an earlier time.

But UW is another recollection. For now, we encounter Wisconsin in its influence to the established standards on core curriculum at WSR. I am using academic jargon here, foreign to the ordinary Juana and Juan, but somewhere when we went the way of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, educators became familiar with the emergent standard testing and established commonality in curriculum.

The Act was big in George W. Bush's White House, and a huge upheaval in education in the CNMI left hurdles from Praxis I and II to entrenched teachers to jump over with a few unable to adequately lace their dancing shoes, and not necessarily because they were pedagogically insufficient. Testing was the culprit.

In '84, Wisconsin, Delaware, and Alabama (WiDA) joined forces to standardize testing on the unclear core curriculum. Alabama dropped off the consortium but others joined in and what started as an acronym for three U.S. States with the lower case "i" in the name of the group, it became just WIDA for its mission and vision on education. In 2007, it published its first edition on standards, after testing on K-2, and in 2012, it tackled Language Development Standards for K-12 in an amplification book.

That's where I come in. Newly resolved to spend the next five years with the Public School System, I am now shepherding first graders into participating in their learning paths, wherever they were from. Some came through Pre-School and Kindergarten so their proficiency in cognitive forms of words and numbers' learning are reflected in their "academic" background while those who came directly from the undisciplined but rich modes of life learning need brackets into their learning ways so they can learn along their classmates the standard organized way of the classroom.

WiDA's 2012 book sits in WSR's faculty room. The developmental standards cover the following fields. First, learners communicate for social and instructional purposes within the school setting. Second, they commerce in information, ideas and concepts in Language Arts; third, manipulate numbers in Mathematics; fourth, follow applied methods in Science; and fifth, review history and sociology in Social Studies. Thus, the five parts of the core curriculum are: Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, and generic communications used in the academic setting of a school.

A child learns to listen, repeat, read and write language, match the words with numbers (math), learn the narrative of the social setting (social studies), try how things work (science), and dissect the structure of language (syntax, et al).

Unfortunately, some pedagogy gets stuck on the academics and forgets the learning. This is why it is imperative that parents understand what is being taught in school, how a child learns, and how to participate in their own learning.

WIDA is a set of standards used by many states to get at the core curriculum. It is not just for professionals to understand. It needs to be a practical tool for parents and learners to use. "Keep it simple, stupid" might smack into arrogance but professionals need to keep parents and learners participate in the process, otherwise, we are at the mercy of academic degree holders adept in morphology, phonology and linguistics, but would not know how to communicate if their lives depended on it.

KSA was a favored acronym in my time. Knowledge, Skills, and Attitude were the areas covered by language teachers who taught Peace Corps Volunteers in the '80s. This fits nicely to the structure of the brain.

Three areas are common to brain literature: the *medula oblungata* is the front line in the brain for sight, smell, sound, taste, and touch, followed by a balancing act of the cerebellum that reflects on the emotions that leads to cognition. The whole thing is next processed in the cortex, aka, cerebrum where sense experience, feeling expressions, and social thought is expressed in words and numbers (the proper area of academics in school). All three then feeds into the will of the body that leads to deeds.

Many of us get stuck on feelings and decisions but selfhood is known by deeds. "Just do it" does not simply come as a slogan for a product. It is the truth about being a self, relating to society and the universe.

It is easy to get lost on the WIDA verbiage that accumulated through its development history. UW is known for its activism, not the architectonic beauty of mental constructs. So, truly, WiDA people!

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

This Easter, fight for religious freedom continues

By CHRISTINE M. FLOWERS
Philadelphia Daily News

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Sometimes, God speaks softly. He shows you the magnificence of his glory in the mewling of a newborn child, eyes still closed against the world but lungs fully operational. Other times, his anger is announced with obvious thunder, like when he sends a plague of locusts down upon recalcitrant heads (or sends workers to repair potholes in the middle of rush hour). And then there are those moments when the good Lord credits us with all the intelligence we presumably have, and makes us connect the dots to find his message.

This week, I started connecting them.

First, I posted something on Facebook, unconfirmed but troubling, about a priest who has been tortured by the Islamic State and is reportedly scheduled for a symbolic crucifixion on Good Friday, and asked my friends to pray for his soul. One (now former) Facebook friend suggested that Christians only care when their own are being killed but have no problem with the deaths of Kurds or other oppressed groups. He also accused me of not being very smart, which might have offended me except for the fact that this young whippersnapper had obsessively inbox-messaged me during law school asking for my assistance with writing projects. As we say in the profession, res ipsa chutzpah.

Then, I accompanied one of my asylum clients to a hearing in Lyndhurst, N.J., where we spent the better part of the day trying to convince an immigration officer that this young man from El Salvador qualified for refugee status. "Mario" had fled his native country one week after his cousin, with whom he used to walk to Mass, was murdered by gang members. These criminals, who belonged to a group known as Mara Dieciocho or the 18th Street gang, didn't like the influence the Catholic church exerted in El Salvador. They were hell bent on recruiting young men to join their ranks, and the priests and nuns in Mario's hometown were equally intent on protecting these kids from a life of crime and certain death. It was a holy war, and the holy ones were losing.

When I was reviewing Mario's paperwork before we went into the asylum interview, I noted the date — March 24, 2016 — at the top of the file, and a chill ran down my spine. Thirty-six years ago to the day, another Salvadoran had waged a mighty battle against the secular forces in his country, channeling the power of God to oppose the brutality of man. His name was Archbishop Oscar Romero, and he was recently beatified by Pope Francis, the first important step toward becoming a saint. Romero was assassinated at the altar while saying Mass, after having openly criticized the government of El Salvador for persecuting the poor. Today, it is not the government but criminals who the government cannot control who are threatening young men whose only crime is going to church.

On the train ride home from Lyndhurst, I was thinking about the interview and how fortunate I was to live in a country where I could openly walk into my preferred place of worship, kneel down in a pew and lift up my prayers to the Lord. I didn't need to worry that, waiting for me in the entry way, was a tattooed man with a gun, ordering me to choose between my faith or my life.

But the sense of well-being and pride in this pluralistic nation dissipated as soon as I opened the newspaper and read about oral arguments before the Supreme Court in a case called Little Sisters of the Poor Home for the Aged v. Burwell. That case involves something more than just the narrow issue of whether the United States government, through bureaucratic rules, can force a religiously affiliated group to provide birth control to its employees in violation of fundamental religious principles.

The case is more like the line in the sand that President Barack Obama presumably drew in Syria when he said we would not allow Bashar Assad to use chemical weapons (which he did) and threatened to invade the country (which we didn't). It is, in other words, the demarcation between the demands of an expanding secular state and the integrity of a religious institution that simply wants to be left alone to do its magnificent work.

I don't need to get into the details of the debate at the high court. It is too complicated to be untangled in 800 words, but suffice it to say that the death of Antonin Scalia, a man who understood the importance of religion in society, has the plaintiff nuns nervous that their refusal to engage in any act that makes them complicit in providing abortion-causing drugs will not be honored under either the First Amendment or the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. And that is almost as scary as what happened to Mario, walking on that dirt road to church with his cousin.

Today is Good Friday, the most solemn day in the Christian calendar. I pray for my tortured brothers and sisters abroad. I pray for my client, that he be looked upon with compassion and given refuge in this country. And I pray for the Little Sisters of the Poor, who stand for all of us against an over-reaching, overbearing government that values its version of health care over the fundamental rights of God's humble servants.

I connected the dots. The picture is frightening.

Uprooting Islamic State's territorial power is more crucial than ever

By TRUDY RUBIN
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Trudy Rubin is a columnist and editorial-board member for the Philadelphia Inquirer. *Readers may write to her at:* Philadelphia Inquirer, *P.O. Box 8263, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101, or by email at trubin@phillynews.com.*

PARIS—After Brussels, President Obama's strategy of gradually degrading the Islamic State looks terribly risky. And much too slow.

Yes, the Islamic State has lost around 40 percent of the territory it seized in Syria and Iraq, much of it retaken by Kurdish forces with U.S. air support. But it still holds the cities at its heart: Raqqa in eastern Syria and the major urban area of Mosul in northern Iraq. Right now, it appears unlikely that either will be liberated in the near term.

That cross-border territorial base enables the jihadis to retain their ideological appeal to alienated Muslim youths in Europe and elsewhere. That base also permits the Islamic State to maintain its fiction that it has resurrected a caliphate. It allows it to train fighters with European passports who can return home and wreak carnage.

Moreover, the fear generated by these attacks is stoking a wave of right-wing populism in Europe that threatens to undermine America's most important alliances—the European Union and NATO.

None of this excuses the glaring European failure to share intelligence, or act on information that might have prevented last week's tragedy. But the Brussels disaster forces the question:

Should the United States be moving more quickly to upend the caliphate, before the Islamic State sinks deeper roots into Europe and North Africa—and spreads to America?

After spending two weeks in Iraq and Syria, my answer is yes. But I don't mean send in the Marines.

Indeed, it is best to look at what won't work before laying out the one plausible (but risky) option that could do the caliphate in.

For starters, let's scratch the idiotic post-Brussels panaceas offered by Donald Trump (more torture) and Ted Cruz ("patrol and secure" Muslim American neighborhoods). Both would create more recruits for the Islamic State than they would deter.

The complexity of the Syrian front has led many to focus first on the Iraq option. U.S. troops have been retraining the Iraqi army that collapsed in 2014 when the Islamic State invaded Mosul. Early hopes were that Mosul could be liberated in 2015, but that goal was pushed back to 2016 and even that date is now in serious doubt.

Speaking at a forum held by the American University of Iraq in Sulaimani, the special presidential envoy for countering the Islamic State cautioned against expectations for a speedy liberation of Mosul. "Everything now is trending the right way, but this will be a long haul," said Brett McGurk in Kurdistan. "This is going to be longer than people want."

The reasons for the delay: A weak and beleaguered Iraqi prime minister is being pressed by Iranian-backed militia leaders to let their Shiite fighters lead the offensive on Mosul — a predominantly Sunni city. This would risk an outbreak of sectarian slaughter.

Political infighting has also delayed the raising of a Sunni tribal force of 15,000 men from northern Iraq to join the army. This Sunni component is essential to reassure Mosul civilians that the anti-Islamic State force won't take revenge on them.

"Fighting between politicians in Baghdad while we are fighting ISIS puts a stone on the way of Iraq," I was told by Gen. Najm al-Jabouri, commander of the operations center tasked with organizing the Mosul offensive. "We don't have enough troops, enough equipment," he told me at his headquarters in Makhmour.

Retraining of Iraqi army troops is slow. Jabouri says he has three brigades but could use eight to 13. These deficits mean that the Mosul offensive will likely take place in stages; any move to retake the urban core probably won't happen until 2017.

This harsh truth forces us to reexamine whether there is any prospect of an earlier liberation of Raqqa, and who could provide the troops.

The easy (but incorrect) answer is: Let the Russians do it with their Assad regime ally. Syrian government troops, backed by Russian air power (yes, Vladimir Putin is still active in Syria) are on the verge of retaking Palmyra, which lies along a crucial route to Raqqa.

But it would be a stretch too far to expect the unsteady Syrian military to take Raqqa. Nor do Moscow or Damascus have a strategic reason to do so. (The continued existence of the Islamic State is used by Russia to justify maintaining Bashar al-Assad in power.)

Which brings us to the only fighters willing and able to retake Raqqa from the Islamic State if a host of political obstacles didn't prevent them: the Syrian Kurds.

Syrian Kurdish fighters, backed by U.S. air power, have already driven the Islamic State out of large swathes of eastern Syria. "We think Raqqa should be retaken as soon as possible," said Salih Muslim, co-president of the Syrian Kurds' Democratic Union Party (PYD), speaking at the Sulaimani forum. "We can stand against ISIS and break down the myth of ISIS."

He's probably right. With greater U.S. support, and an effort to enlist more Sunni tribal fighters to join the Kurds, they might well take Raqqa. Muslim says they would give this Sunni city local rule within their self-declared federal region of Rojava and North Syria. He says the Kurds would ensure that the Islamic State 2.0 would not emerge in the liberated area.

But Turkey, at war with its own rebel Kurds, violently opposes this idea.

Washington should try harder to persuade Turkey's mercurial President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to renew talks with Kurdish rebels in both Turkey and Syria, but he doesn't seem open to reason.

Moreover, it's far from clear that Raqqa's Sunni Arab population would accept living under Kurdish overlordship. "This could become a real incendiary issue between Kurds, Arabs and Turks," says Joshua Landis, the University of Oklahoma's noted Syria expert.

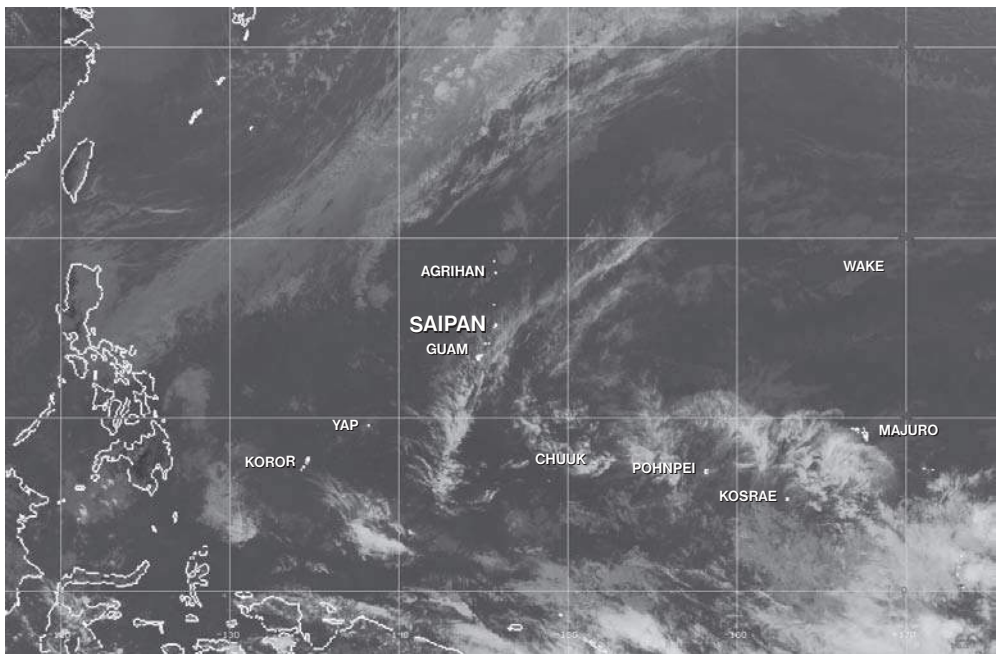
Yet if the goal is to destroy the Islamic State caliphate more quickly, helping the Kurds of Syria take Raqqa may be the only option, one that must at least be seriously examined. The longer the Islamic State keeps its territorial base in Raqqa and Mosul, the more its threat to the West will grow.

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly sunny with isolated light showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated light showers. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly sunny with isolated light showers.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers.
▲87º ▼76º	▲87º ▼76º	▲87º ▼75º	▲87º ▼75º	▲87º ▼75º

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00 PM, MONDAY, MARCH 28, 2016

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A nearly stationary front stretches southwestward from east of IWO to island at 25N145E to beyond 130E at 15N. Cloudiness and scattered showers are along and up to 350 miles northwest of this front. Scattered showers associated with weak trade-wind disturbances are occurring southwest of Koror west of a line from 8N132E to 3N132E and south of Yap between 6N and 2N from 137E to 142E. A frontal boundary stretches westward from 21N180 to Wake Island, then continues west-northwestward as a shear line to 21N153E. Cloudiness and scattered showers are found along and up to 190 miles north of this boundary west of 19N174E and up to 120 north of the front east of 19N174E. A trade-wind disturbance is triggering scattered showers north of Kosrae and across the northern Marshall Islands within 100 miles of a line from 12N160e to 8N171E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms associated with a near-equatorial trough are present south of Kosrae and the Marshall Islands between 5N and the equator from 160E to the date line.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

Micronesia

Guam And Rota	Mostly Sunny	▲87	▼72
Palau	Mostly Sunny	▲89	▼75
Yap	Mostly Sunny	▲91	▼74
Chuuk	Cloudy	▲87	▼81
Pohnpei	Sunny	▲86	▼76
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	▲84	▼75
Majuro	Sunny	▲86	▼74

Around the Globe

Auckland	Mostly Sunny	▲72	▼61
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲71	▼22
Hong Kong	Sunny	▲71	▼56
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲79	▼61
London	Sunny	▲52	▼37
Los Angeles	Overcast	▲63	▼48
Manila	Sunny	▲85	▼70
Melbourne	Cloudy	▲63	▼49
Miami	Overcast	▲84	▼72
New York	Overcast	▲60	▼44
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲59	▼30
Paris	Partly Cloudy	▲56	▼42
Pusan	Sunny	▲57	▼38
Rome	Mostly Cloudy	▲61	▼53
Salem	Cloudy	▲54	▼39
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	▲61	▼38
Seoul	Sunny	▲54	▼42
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	▲60	▼41
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲68	▼42

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Tides

Saipan Harbor

5:10 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.9 Feet
10:31 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
5:40 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:15 AM	6:29 PM
Wednesday	6:14 AM	6:29 PM
Thursday	6:13 AM	6:29 PM
Friday	6:13 AM	6:29 PM
Saturday	6:12 AM	6:30 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	11:06 PM	10:02 AM
Wednesday	11:56 PM	10:48 AM
Thursday	-	11:38 AM
Friday	12:47 AM	12:30 PM
Saturday	1:37 AM	1:24 PM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 1, 2016

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA2924	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA2922	8:40am	9:30am	Daily
UA2921	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota
UA2920	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6
UA2928	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily
UA2926	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA2921	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA2921	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL297	4:20pm	7:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ628	3:50am	7:40am	Daily
7C3403	4:35am	8:30am	Daily
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	5:30am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ626/701	2:50am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA2924/191	4:15am	9:00am	3, 6 via GUM
UA2924/PR111	4:15am	9:20am	Daily via GUM
UA2922/183	8:40am	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2922/183	8:40am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA2922/193	8:40am	11:10pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA2921/183	1:30pm	9:30pm	5 via Rota-GUM
UA2921/183	1:30pm	9:50pm	1, 4, 7 via Rota-GUM
UA2921/193	1:30pm	11:10pm	5 via Rota-GUM
UA2920/183	2:20pm	9:30pm	2 via GUM
UA2920/183	2:20pm	9:50pm	3, 6 via GUM
UA2920/193	2:20pm	11:10pm	2 via GUM-ROR
UA2928/183	6:05pm	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2928/183	6:05pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA2928/193	6:05pm	11:10pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2926/191	9:50pm	7:20am+1	1, 6 via GUM
UA2926/191	9:50pm	9:00am+1	3, 6 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ628/721	3:50am	12:50am	Daily via ICN
UA2922/159	8:40am	10:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA2921/159	1:30pm	10:35pm	1, 5 via Rota-GUM
UA2920/159	2:20pm	10:35pm	3, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA2923	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA2925	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA2921	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA2920	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA2927	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA2929	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA2920	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA2920	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:35am	3:10pm	Daily

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
OZ627	9:30pm	2:50am+1	Daily
7C3404	10:10pm	3:30am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:30pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA190/2927	9:55am	5:35pm	2, 6, 7 via GUM
UA190/2929	9:55am	9:20pm	2, 6, 7 via GUM
UA190/2927	10:00am	5:35pm	3 via GUM
UA190/2929	10:00am	9:20pm	3 via GUM
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ702/627	12:30pm	2:50am+1	Daily via ICN
PR110/UA2925	10:05pm	8:05am+1	Daily via GUM
UA192/2925	10:20pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA192/2920	10:20pm	1:50pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA192/2927	10:20pm	5:35pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA192/2929	10:20pm	9:20pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2925	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2921	10:55pm	1:00pm+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2920	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	1 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2927	10:55pm	5:35pm+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2929	10:55pm	9:20pm+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2925	11:59pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/2920	11:59pm	1:50pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2927	11:59pm	5:35pm+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/2929	11:59pm	9:20pm+1	2, 5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ724/627	2:20pm	2:50am+1	Daily via ICN
UA116/2925	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA116/2921	10:55pm	1:00pm+1	3, 6 via GUM
UA116/2920	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	1, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA116/2927	10:55pm	5:35pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA116/2929	10:55pm	9:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; 7C: Jeju AirETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
6:30AM	6:45AM	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
12:30NN	12:45NN	Daily
1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
12:00NN	12:15NN	Daily
1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:45AM	8:15AM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:00PM	4:30PM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:45PM	5:15PM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

Business

Chocolate and beer: Belgians fear attacks will hurt tourism

BRUSSELS (AP)—At the aptly named Planete Chocolat, the shelves are laden with enticing Easter treasures for shoppers: bunnies with bows, pastel-wrapped eggs and elegant boxes of pralines.

Swannee Vranckx, a clerk at the shop near Brussels' main square, said she would normally have seen 50 to 100 customers by midafternoon in the days before one of the biggest holidays of the Christian year. But after the bombing attacks that shattered the tranquility of Belgium's capital, only a handful had come in search of Easter treats.

AP

This Saturday, March 26, 2016 photo shows chocolate Easter Eggs and bunnies on display in a shop near the EU Commission in Brussels.

While the city's chocolatiers are quick to offer condolences to the victims of the tragedy, they are equally fast to express their concerns about the future. Their livelihoods depend on people from around the globe streaming into their shops to indulge in their world-famous goodies—and they know that tourists don't go places they don't feel safe.

"I'm sure it will happen—people will cancel their trips," Vranckx said. "They think it is a place for terrorists."

The March 22 attacks that killed 31 people and wounded 270 are only Brussels' latest brush with violence. Just days before the bombings, Belgian and French police arrested Salah Abdeslam, the chief suspect in the Nov. 13 attacks that left 130 people dead in Paris, in his Brussels hideout. In May 2014, three people were killed when a gunman targeted the Jewish museum of Belgium.

The notion that Belgium, a small Western European nation of 11 million, might become known for terrorism is shocking to many here. This is a place where U.S. President Barack Obama says it was "easy to love a country known for chocolate and beer."

And at Easter, the nation's sweet tooth is on full display: shop windows are crammed with chocolate. Belgians are said to eat more than 8 kilograms (17.6 pounds) of the stuff every year—ranking them among the world's top consumers.

The country traces its love affair with chocolate to King Leopold II's control of the Congo in the late 19th century, which provided the country with a ready supply of cocoa. Things really began to take off after 1912, when the son of a Swiss pharmacist created the first filled chocolates, which he called pralines, at his family's Brussels factory.

Today, Belgian chocolatiers ship their wares around the world and Brussels shopkeepers compete with artistic window displays in hopes of luring in tourists on their way to the art museums or the Grand Place, the UNESCO world heritage site.

This year, not far from there, residents and visitors alike gathered to remember the victims and scrawl messages of sadness and hope in the aftermath of the attacks.

The bombings will cut consumer spending on recreation, leisure and tourism but they are likely to have only a short-term impact on the whole Belgian economy, according to Francesca Peck, an economist at IHS Global Insight in London. The losses may be magnified because the attacks occurred so close to the long Easter weekend, when restaurants and bars are typically busy.

As a result, the Belgian economy is expected to grow 1.45 percent this year, down from a previous forecast of 1.6 percent, IHS estimated.

Master your tasks before asking for more

YOUR OFFICE COACH

By MARIE G. MCINTYRE
Tribune News Service

Marie G. McIntyre is a workplace coach and the author of "Secrets to Winning at Office Politics." Send in questions and get free coaching tips at http://www.yourofficecoach.com, or follow her on Twitter @officecoach.

Q: Four months ago, after working as a department head for 15 years, I accepted a lower-level management position in order to move closer to my family. Although I like my new company, I have been very disappointed in my manager, who seems unwilling to delegate any of his duties.

Despite the fact that my qualifications are equal to his, my boss shows no interest in using my abilities. If I ask him to train me in certain corporate procedures, he says we'll get around to it eventually. When I offer to help with his projects, he always puts me off.

As a manager, I have always encouraged people to go beyond the limits of their job, but my boss apparently doesn't share this philosophy. How can I get him to relinquish some of his responsibilities?

A: When you're accustomed to being in charge, moving to a lower level can be tough. After many years of managing complex projects and making key decisions, you naturally feel qualified to do more than this position requires. But while your desire for greater responsibility is understandable, your expectations may be unrealistic.

At this point, your manager's primary concern is your ability and willingness to do the job for which you were hired. After only four months, expanding your role is likely to seem premature. Should you appear too eager to push the boundaries, he may actually view that as a red flag.

If you appear to be telling your boss what to do or attempting to take over his work, he could easily become wary and defensive. The harder you push, the more he will resist. So if you want him to take advantage of your many talents, you may need to back off a bit.

Instead of actively lobbying for higher-level work, demonstrate your potential by doing a bang-up job with your current duties and developing a good relationship with your manager. When he feels that he can trust both your competence and your motives, you may find him much more willing to delegate.

Q: Two of my co-workers always bring their knitting to meetings. Their excuse is that knitting helps them relax and pay attention. I personally find this very embarrassing, especially when people from outside our department are present. However, my supervisor doesn't seem to care, so I don't know what to do about it.

A: I'm not sure you should do anything. Knitting in meetings is certainly unusual, but unless your colleagues have noisy needles, it shouldn't disturb anyone. And even if outsiders view this as unprofessional, your own reputation is unlikely to be tarnished by the knitters.

But if you truly believe this is important, address the issue with your seemingly indifferent supervisor. For example: "I know that Mary and Joan enjoy knitting in meetings, but I think it makes our whole group look unprofessional, especially to people outside the department. What are your thoughts about this?"

If your supervisor agrees, then the knitting might be curtailed. But if not, perhaps you should consider submitting a request for a scarf.

Al-Jazeera to slash 500 jobs, many in its Qatar headquarters

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP)—Al-Jazeera, the Qatar-based broadcaster, said Sunday it is slashing about 500 jobs a little more than two months after announcing the closure of its U.S. offshoot.

The cutbacks come as 2022 World Cup host Qatar refocuses its spending priorities amid a steep drop in prices for oil and gas, the backbone of the OPEC nation's economy.

The Al-Jazeera Media Network described the cuts as part of a "workforce optimization initiative" tied to an evolving media landscape.

They will enable Al-Jazeera to "maintain a leading position and continue our recognized commitment to high quality, independent and hard-hitting journalism around the world," acting Director General Mostefa Souag said in a statement.

The network did not make officials available for comment, but confirmed it currently employs about 4,500 people. Most of those losing their jobs are based in Qatar.

Al-Jazeera began as an Arabic-language news channel in 1996 with backing from Qatar's then-emir, Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani. It now has multiple channels, including an international English-language service, and boasts more than 70 bureaus worldwide.

It struggled to crack into the U.S. market, however. It announced in January it was shutting down its Al Jazeera America cable news network, launched in October 2013, after struggling to attract viewers and convince cable and satellite companies to carry it.

Like other major energy producers, Qatar is under pressure from a steep slide in oil prices that has pushed crude to less than $40 a barrel from more than $100 in the summer of 2014. Several prominent Qatari employers have cut jobs in recent months, and authorities in January hiked subsidized gasoline prices by at least 30 percent.

Even with cutbacks in government spending, Qatar expects to run a budget deficit of more than $12 billion this year.

Israel's Supreme Court shoots down gas deal

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israel's Supreme Court on Sunday overturned the government's landmark deal to begin pumping natural gas, handing a painful blow to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and a consortium of energy companies.

The decision gave parliament a year to amend the plan or the framework will be canceled. It cited a clause in the deal that would prevent Israel from making significant regulatory changes for the next 10 years as reason for scuttling it. It argued the clause restricted parliament's powers.

Netanyahu has made the energy deal a centerpiece of his agenda, saying the gas sales from Israel's large reserves would bring energy self-sufficiency and billions of dollars in tax revenues. Critics have said the deal gave excessively favorable terms to the government's corporate partners.

Netanyahu criticized the ruling, saying it "severely threatens the development of the gas reserves" of Israel. "Israel is seen as a state with excessive judicial interference in which it is difficult to do business. Certainly nobody has any reason to celebrate that the gas is liable to remain in the depths of the sea and that hundreds billions of shekels will not reach the citizens of Israel," he said.

Resource-poor Israel announced the discovery of sizeable offshore natural gas deposits about five years ago, and a partnership of Israeli and U.S. companies, including Texas-based Noble Energy and Israel's Delek Group—have already begun extracting some reserves.

Nation

Supreme Court nominee formed lasting bonds at Harvard

BOSTON (AP)—From his first days at Harvard, Merrick Garland's classmates pegged him as a star. Smartest guy in the room, self-confident, easy-going and thoughtful are some of the compliments they still pay him 40 years later.

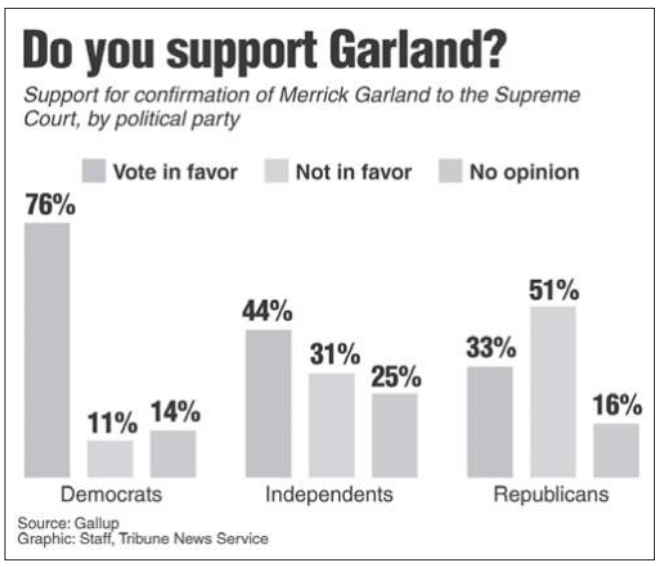
For Garland, President Barack Obama's choice to fill a vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court, the bonds formed at Harvard College and Harvard Law School have stayed with him and come into play during a career in private practice, as a prosecutor and on the bench.

Classmates said Garland followed a straight and narrow path, even as a young man during a tumultuous time marked by Watergate and protests over the Vietnam War. Every move he made, even back then, seems to have been designed for an unblemished track to success.

"This is something he has modestly prepared himself for his whole career," said Elliot Gerson, a friend from his Harvard undergraduate days who now oversees the U.S. Rhodes Scholarships.

AP

Senate Judiciary Committee member Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., right, which considers judicial nominations, walks with Judge Merrick Garland, President Barack Obama's choice to replace the late Justice Antonin Scalia on the Supreme Court, Tuesday, March 22, 2016, on Capitol Hill in Washington.



Garland graduated with honors from Harvard College in 1974 and Harvard Law School in 1977, helping to pay for his education by working summers as a shoe-store clerk and selling his comic book collection. Since then he's kept strong ties, teaching anti-trust law, serving on the Board of Overseers and participating in moot court for law students.

Former Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, who worked with Garland on the prestigious Harvard Law Review, recalled how Garland was chosen to edit an article submitted by Supreme Court Justice William Brennan.

"For the law review to get a sitting justice to write an article—to be chosen to be the editor on that required that you be someone who was both at the top of the class in terms of brains, but also having a good demeanor and a way with people ... easy to get along with," Chertoff said.

Brennan later hired Garland as a law clerk.

Susan Estrich, now a well-known political operative, beat Garland when they both ran for law review president in 1976.

"Some people, when they run for something and don't get it, they just walk away and say, 'The heck with you.' Merrick jumped in with both feet and said, 'I'll do anything I can to help you'," Estrich said.

After her father's death, Estrich said, Garland made a point of including her in his social circle.

Presidential primary brings sheriff back into spotlight

PHOENIX (AP)—First came the endorsement. Arizona's contentious Sheriff Joe Arpaio showered his support on Donald Trump, then campaigned for him ahead of the state presidential primary. He appeared on TV and at a huge rally with the Republican presidential front-runner in the lawman's hometown.

Then came the criticism. Democrats Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders denounced the sheriff known for his hardline stance on illegal immigration, calling him out at their own campaign events.

The national exposure leading to the March 22 primary marked a return to the political spotlight for Arpaio, an influential figure in Republican circles who has spent the last year lying low as he faces the possibility of criminal charges in his home state.

Trump invoked Arpaio's name in his calls for tougher immigration enforcement, while Clinton and Sanders called his tactics disrespectful and divisive.

"It is easy for bullies like Sheriff Arpaio to pick on people who have no power. If I'm elected president, the president of the United States does have power," Sanders told a crowd in Flagstaff. "Watch out, Joe."

The 83-year-old sheriff is seeking a seventh term this year. Over the last year, he has faced unrelenting scrutiny because of a racial profiling case in which he has acknowledged disobeying court orders. He also was accused of secretly investigating the case's judge in a bid to discredit him.

The judge is mulling whether to hold Arpaio in civil contempt of court for defying his orders to stop his immigration patrols. Such a finding would bring him a step closer to a possible criminal contempt case that could expose him to fines and even jail time. The judge also has said Arpaio's office doesn't adequately investigate alleged wrongdoing by his officers and has questioned whether the sheriff testified truthfully about the secret investigation.

Arpaio denies investigating the judge.

The Maricopa County sheriff is responsible for providing police services to 4 million people in metro Phoenix. Seven candidates have filed papers so far to challenge Arpaio, but none has come anywhere close to matching the campaign financing that has helped the lawman get elected in the past. He spent $7.9 million during his 2012 campaign and raised nearly $2.5 million in contributions over the last year.

Is algebra an unnecessary stumbling block in US schools?

NEW YORK (AP)—Who needs algebra?

That question muttered by many a frustrated student over the years has become a vigorous debate among American educators, sparked by a provocative new book that argues required algebra has become an unnecessary stumbling block that forces millions to drop out of high school or college.

"One out of 5 young Americans does not graduate from high school. This is one of the worst records in the developed world. Why? The chief academic reason is they failed ninth-grade algebra," said political scientist Andrew Hacker, author of "The Math Myth and Other STEM Delusions."

Hacker, a professor emeritus at Queens College, argues that, at most, only 5 percent of jobs make use of algebra and other advanced math courses. He favors a curriculum that focuses more on statistics and basic numbers sense and less on (y—3)2 = 4y—12.

"Will algebra help you understand the federal budget?" he asked.

Many U.S. educators, including the architects of the Common Core standards, disagree, saying math just needs to be taught more effectively. It's fine for students to have quantitative skills, they say, but algebra is important, too.

"Every study I've ever seen of workers in whole bunches of fields shows that you have to understand formulas, you have to understand relationships," said Philip Uri Treisman, a professor of mathematics and of public affairs at the University of Texas. "Algebra is the tool for consolidating your knowledge of arithmetic."

Bill McCallum, a professor at the University of Arizona who played a lead role in developing the Common Core standards for math, said he would oppose any division of K-12 students into an algebra track and a non-algebra track.

"You might say only a certain percentage of kids will go on to use algebra, but we don't know which kids those are," he said.

In New York City, home to the nation's largest public school system with 1.1 million pupils, just 52 percent of the students who took last year's statewide Regents test in Algebra I passed, mirroring statistics elsewhere in the country.

Rather than scaling back on algebra, New York City educators have announced an "Algebra for All" initiative that aims to keep students on track by providing specialized math teachers in fifth grade, before algebra is introduced.

"We believe in high standards," said Carol Mosesson-Teig, director of mathematics for the city Department of Education. "And we believe that the best way to serve the students is to strengthen the instruction."

Airport aims to use Uber drivers' fingerprints to check past

ATLANTA (AP)—A battle over background checks for Uber drivers at the world's busiest airport comes as cities like Los Angeles and Austin, Texas, consider more thorough screenings to prevent criminals from getting behind the wheel.

Uber has objected to the Atlanta airport's plan to use fingerprints to check criminal records of its drivers, saying its own record checks are sufficient.

But the district attorney in Uber's hometown of San Francisco has called the ride-booking firm's process "completely worthless" since drivers aren't fingerprinted.

In Houston, city officials say they found that background checks without fingerprints allow criminals who have been charged with murder, sexual assault and other crimes to evade detection in a variety of ways.

Atlanta's city council on Wednesday is set to consider the airport's plan for screening drivers for Uber, Lyft and other ride-booking firms when proposed new rules go before the council's transportation committee.

Uber has agreements with more than 50 U.S. airports, none of which require the fingerprint-based background checks being proposed by Atlanta' s airport, the company said in a statement. Those airports include major air hubs in Denver; Los Angeles; Memphis, Tennessee; Charlotte, North Carolina; and Salt Lake City, Utah.

But New York City does fingerprint drivers, and the mayor of Los Angeles this month asked state regulators to allow his city to do so as well.

Houston, the nation's fourth-largest city, was among the first in the nation to require drivers for Uber and other ride-booking firms to undergo fingerprint-based background checks using the FBI's database. Houston's program began in November 2014, and city officials there say they're far more thorough than any other way of checking someone's criminal past.

"Public safety is our No. 1 priority—that's something the city of Houston does not compromise on," said Lara Cottingham, Houston's deputy assistant director of administration and regulatory affairs. "That's the reason we license any vehicle for hire."

Asia

Pakistani Taliban faction claims Easter park bombing

ISLAMABAD (AP)—A bombing on Easter Sunday killed 65 people in a park in the eastern city of Lahore that was crowded with Christians, including many children.

A breakaway Pakistani faction of the militant Taliban group claimed responsibility. Ahsanullah Ahsan, spokesman for Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, told the Associated Press that a suicide bomber with the faction deliberately targeted the Christian community.

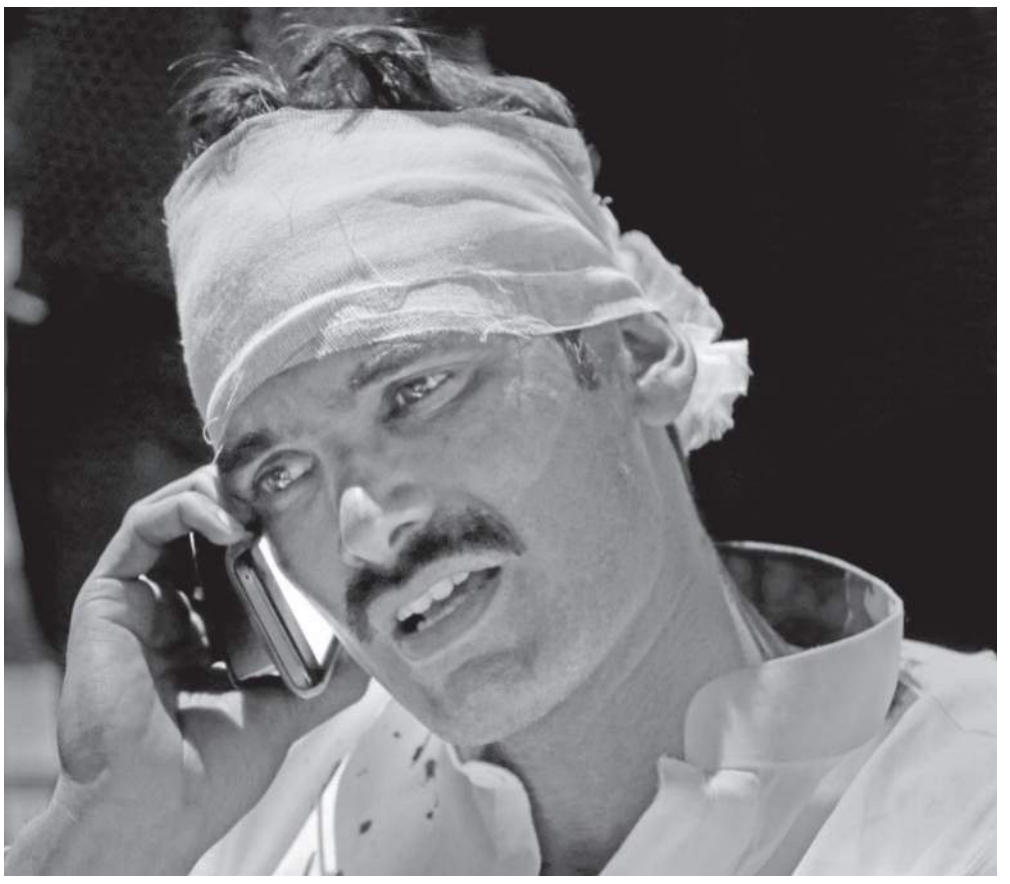
The explosion took place near the children's rides in Gulshan-e-Iqbal park local police chief Haider Ashraf said. He said the explosion appeared to have been a suicide bombing, but investigations were ongoing.

The attack killed 65 people and wounded over 300, said Deeba Shahnaz, a spokesman for Lahore rescue administration.

Punjab's chief minister Shahbaz Sharif announced three days of mourning and pledged to bring the perpetrators to justice, said Zaeem Qadri, a spokesman for the provincial government.

The park was manned by police and private security guards, police chief Haider Ashraf said. "We are in a warlike situation and there is always a general threat but no specific threat alert was received for this place," he added.

Schools and businesses in the city will remain closed on Monday, the city's schools association and the Union of Lahore Traders said.



AP

A Pakistani injured man from a bomb blast talks on his cell phone at a local hospital in Lahore, Pakistan, Sunday, March, 27, 2016.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif held a meeting to assess the security situation in Lahore, according to a government statement. Pakistan's army chief, Gen. Raheel Sharif, also convened an emergency meeting of the country's intelligence agencies to begin to track down those responsible for the attacks, said army spokesman Gen. Asim Saleem Bajwa.

Salman Rafiq, a health adviser to the Punjab government, called on people to donate blood, saying that many of those wounded were in a critical condition.

One witness, who wished to be identified only by his first name, Afzal, told AP that he had taken 20 children to hospital and carried three dead bodies to a police car. "I can't explain to you the tragic situation," he said.

Another witness, Tariq Mustapha, said that he had just left the park when he heard an explosion. He said his friend was still missing.

Footage broadcast on local television stations showed chaotic scenes in the park, with people running while carrying children and cradling the wounded in their laps.

A witness, not identified by name on Pakistan's Geo TV station, said he was heading toward a fairground ride with his wife and two children when he heard a huge bang and all four of them were thrown to the floor. A woman was shown crying while looking desperately for her missing 5-year-old son.

A spokesman for the U.S. National Security Council said that the United States "condemns the attack in the strongest terms," describing it as a "cowardly act in what has long been a scenic and placid park." Ned Price said the U.S. would continue to work with Pakistan and its partners to "root out the scourge of terrorism."

Vikas Swarup, spokesman for India's External Affairs ministry, tweeted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi telephoned Pakistani premier Nawaz Sharif to express his deep condolences. He said Modi "underlined the need for uncompromising efforts to fight against terrorism."

ASIAN BRIEFS

Afghan official says Taliban gun down provincial judge

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—An Afghan official says insurgents have killed the top judge on a provincial appeals court. Jawed Salangi, spokesman for the governor of the eastern Ghazni province, said Sunday that Mohammad Anwar was ambushed and shot while in neighboring Wardak province the day before. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the killing in an email sent to reporters. Insurgent attacks on Afghan security forces and officials have intensified across the country in the past year. Judicial officials have long been Taliban targets. Anwar's killing comes days after the nomination of a new attorney general, Farid Hamidi. Hamidi is a former human rights commissioner whose appointment has to be approved by parliament. President Ashraf Ghani has struggled to fill key security posts, with ministers of defense and interior acting in their positions.

Fire at prison kills 5 inmates in western Indonesia

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—A fire started by rioting prisoners at a penitentiary in western Indonesia has killed five inmates, police said. The fire at Malabero prison in Bengkulu on Sumatra Island began Friday night after officers of the anti-narcotics agency entered the facility and took away a drug kingpin, said regional police chief Brig. Gen. M. Ghufron. He said the inmates were believed to be acting in solidarity with the kingpin, who was allegedly controlling the business from inside the prison. Five inmates were killed in the fire, one was being treated while 252 others have been moved to Bentiring, another prison in the same town. Indonesia, which has extremely strict drug laws and often executes smugglers, has been intensifying raids as a number of users jumped from 4.2 million to nearly 6 million last year. More than 130 people are on death row, mostly for drug crimes. About a third of them are foreigners.

Afghan official says Taliban gun down provincial judge

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—An Afghan official says insurgents have killed the top judge on a provincial appeals court. Jawed Salangi, spokesman for the governor of the eastern Ghazni province, said Sunday that Mohammad Anwar was ambushed and shot while in neighboring Wardak province the day before. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the killing in an email sent to reporters. Insurgent attacks on Afghan security forces and officials have intensified across the country in the past year. Judicial officials have long been Taliban targets. Anwar's killing comes days after the nomination of a new attorney general, Farid Hamidi. Hamidi is a former human rights commissioner whose appointment has to be approved by parliament. President Ashraf Ghani has struggled to fill key security posts, with ministers of defense and interior acting in their positions.

China orders military to end all paid outside work

BEIJING (AP)—China has ordered its armed forces to end all paid outside work within the next three years as part of a push to make the world's largest standing military more professional and battle ready.

A Defense Ministry notice viewed Monday said both the regular army and the paramilitary People's Armed Police would be covered under the ban. It identified no specific fields but is thought to mainly target military art troupes, publishing houses and hospitals that accept paying civilian patients.

The ban is a "major political task concerning the overall scope of military construction and development," the notice said, emphasizing the need for officers and troops to adhere to the guidance of the ruling Communist Party headed by President Xi Jinping, who also leads the party and government commissions that control the armed forces.

The 2.3 million-member People's Liberation Army was ordered more than a decade ago to divest itself from its vast business empire that included factories and transport firms and was viewed as fueling corruption and slack discipline.

The latest round of reforms have reorganized parts of the command structure and will reduce troop numbers by 300,000, mainly by culling non-combat units and those using outdated equipment.

The reforms are also seeing a shift away from the land forces, which now account for about 73 percent of total troop strength, and more toward the navy and air force that are seen as responsible for dealing with the main perceived threats to China's interests—a conflict over control of the South China Sea and a move by self-governing Taiwan toward formal independence that China has threatened to respond to with force.

After decades of large annual increases, the defense budget is also growing at a smaller pace in line with lower growth in the overall Chinese economy.

Military spending will rise 7.6 percent this year, despite tensions with China's neighbors over disputed portions of the South China Sea. The military budget of 954 billion yuan ($146.5 billion) keeps China in second place in global defense spending behind the United States.

Myanmar's military vows to join hands with civilian leaders

NAYPYITAW, Myanmar (AP)—Myanmar's military chief on Sunday pledged to join hands with a new civilian government that takes over the Southeast Asian country next week, after 54 years of rule by the junta or its proxy.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing said that the armed forces will work to bring about prosperity for the nation, but also warned about challenges.

"The two main hindrances to democratization are not abiding by the rule of law and the presence of armed insurgencies. These could lead to a chaotic democracy," he said in a speech during the annual Armed Forces Day parade in the capital of Naypyitaw.

Myanmar's military ran the country directly or indirectly for five decades before handing over to a quasi-civilian government in 2011. Last year's elections propelled Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy into power, although the military remains a powerful political force.

Suu Kyi's aide, President-elect Htin Kyaw, will take office next Friday.

The relationship between Min Aung Hlaing and Suu Kyi is likely to be the key to the next five years in Myanmar. The Nobel Peace prize laureate is still barred from the presidency by a clause in the military-drafted constitution that was almost certainly aimed specifically at her.

The military also has reserved 25 percent of the seats in parliament for itself, guaranteeing that no government can amend the constitution without its approval. It also ensured that one of Htin Kyaw's two vice presidents is a former general, Myint Swe, a close ally of former junta leader Than Shwe.

World

Syrian forces recapture ancient city of Palmyra from IS

DAMASCUS, Syria (AP)—Syrian government forces recaptured the ancient city of Palmyra on Sunday, scoring an important victory over Islamic State fighters who waged a 10-month reign of terror there and dealing the group its first major defeat since an international agreement to battle terrorism in the fractured nation took effect last year.

The city known to Syrians as the "Bride of the Desert" is famous for its 2,000-year-old ruins that once drew tens of thousands of visitors each year before IS destroyed many of the monuments. The extent of the destruction remained unclear. Initial footage on Syrian TV showed widespread rubble and shattered statues. But Palmyra's grand colonnades appeared to be in relatively good condition.

AP

This undated file image released by UNESCO shows the site of the ancient city of Palmyra, Syria. Palmyra is an archaeological gem that Syrian troops took back from Islamic State fighters, Sunday, March 27, 2016.

The government forces were supported by Lebanese militias and Russian air power. The Islamic State now faces pressure on several fronts as Kurdish ground forces advance on its territory in Syria's north and government forces have a new path to its de facto capital, Raqqa, and the contested eastern city of Deir el-Zour.

International airstrikes have pounded IS territory, killing two top leaders in recent weeks, according to the Pentagon. Those strikes have also inflicted dozens of civilian casualties.

In Iraq, government forces backed by the U.S. and Iran are preparing a ground offensive to retake the country's second largest city, Mosul.

The fall of Palmyra comes a month after a partial cease-fire in Syria's civil war came into force. The truce was sponsored by the United States and Russia in part to allow the government and international community to focus on al-Qaida styled militants, among them the IS group.

In comments reported on state TV, President Bashar Assad described the Palmyra operation as a "significant achievement" offering "new evidence of the effectiveness of the strategy espoused by the Syrian army and its allies in the war against terrorism."

IS drove government forces from Palmyra in a matter of days last May and later demolished some of its best-known monuments, including two large temples dating back more than 1,800 years and a Roman triumphal archway.

State TV showed the rubble left over from the destruction of the Temple of Bel as well as the damaged archway, the supports of which were still standing. It said a statue of Zenobia, the third century queen who ruled an independent state from Palmyra and figures strongly in Syrian lore, was missing.

Pope at Easter recalls victims of 'blind, brutal terrorism'

VATICAN CITY (AP)—Pope Francis tempered his Easter Sunday message of Christian hope with a denunciation of "blind" terrorism, recalling victims of attacks in Europe, Africa and elsewhere, as well as expressing dismay that people fleeing war or poverty are being denied welcome as European countries squabble over the refugee crisis.

Tens of thousands of people patiently endured long lines, backpack inspections and metal-detecting checks Sunday to enter St. Peter's Square. Under a brilliant sun, they listened to Francis deliver the traditional noon Easter speech from the central balcony of St. Peter's Basilica.

To their delight, Francis completed a whirl through the square, made colorful with sprays of tulips and other spring flowers, in his open-topped pope-mobile after celebrating Mass on the steps of the basilica. He leaned over barriers to shake hands, as the vehicle ventured past the Vatican's confines, with his bodyguards jogging alongside on the boulevard.

In Jerusalem, the cavernous Holy Sepulcher church—where Christians believe Jesus was crucified, buried and resurrected—was packed with worshippers commemorating the day they believe Jesus was resurrected in Jerusalem some 2,000 years ago.

For years, Islamist extremists in social media have listed the Vatican and Rome as potential targets due to hosting the headquarters of the Roman Catholic church and several basilicas. Despite the threats, Francis has kept to his habit of trying to be in close physical contact with ordinary people.

Francis said, for the faithful, Jesus who rose after death by crucifixion "triumphed over evil and sin." He expressed hope that "will draw us closer to the victims of terrorism, that blind and brutal form of violence."

At the end of Mass, he chatted briefly with the former king and queen of Belgium, Albert II and Paola, who attended the ceremony.

In his speech, Francis cited recent attacks in Belgium, Turkey, Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, Ivory Coast and Iraq.

Separately, in a condolences telegram, the pope said he was saddened by "the great loss of life caused by the terrorist attack" during a match in an Iraqi soccer stadium Friday. That attack, claimed by Islamic State group, killed more than 40 people.

Francis said he prayed that the Iraqi people would, in response to the attack, "be strengthened in their resolve to reject the ways of hatred and conflict to work together'" for a future of mutual respect and freedom.

Riot at Brussels attacks shrine; 13 anti-terror raids made

BRUSSELS (AP)—Belgian riot police clashed Sunday with hundreds of right-wing hooligans at a temporary shrine honoring victims of the Brussels suicide bombings, as investigators launched fresh anti-terror raids, taking four more people into custody.

Police used water cannon when scuffles broke out in front of the Bourse, which has become a symbolic rallying point for people to pay their respects to those who died in Tuesday's attacks. Black clad men carrying an anti-Islamic State group banner with an expletive on it trampled parts of the shrine, shouting Nazi slogans. Ten were arrested and two police officers injured.

"We had 340 hooligans from different football clubs who came to Brussels and we knew for sure that they would create some trouble," Police Commissioner Christian De Coninck said. "It was a very difficult police operation because lots of families with kids were here

Brussels mayor Yvan Mayeur expressed his disgust, with Belgium still in mourning over the suicide bombings at Brussels airport and subway, which killed at least 31 people and injured some 270.

"The police were not deployed to protect people from these hooligans but a whole other threat," said Mayeur told RTL television.

People trying to pay their respects were also dismayed.

"It was important for us to be here symbolically," said Samia Orosemane, a 35-year-old comedian. But, she added, "there were lots of men who were here and doing the Nazi salute, shouting 'death to Arabs' and so we weren't able to get through."

"We are all here today for peace, and for the brotherhood among peoples. Not for right-wing ideas. It's neither the time nor the place," said Theophile Mouange, 52.

Federal prosecutors, meanwhile, said Sunday morning's raids were linked a "federal case regarding terrorism" but did not specify whether it had any links to the March 22 attacks.

Thirteen raids were launched in the capital and the northern cities of Mechelen and Duffel. An investigating judge was to decide later whether to keep the four in custody. Five were released after questioning.

Suspected plotters also were arrested Sunday in Italy and the Netherlands, though few details of their activity were released immediately.

WORLD BRIEFS

Soldier's shooting of Palestinian sets off uproar in Israel

JERUSALEM (AP)—Amateur video appearing to show an Israeli soldier killing an already wounded Palestinian attacker sparked uproar in Israel on Sunday, reflecting the deep divisions in the country following six months of violence. As the Israeli military pressed on with an investigation, nationalistic politicians accused the army of abandoning the soldier, while political doves bemoaned the erosion of the nation's morals. Palestinians, meanwhile, said the shooting proved their claims that Israel is guilty of using excessive force and carrying out extrajudicial killings. The shooting took place last Thursday in Hebron, the volatile West Bank city that has been a focal point of the latest wave of Israeli-Palestinian violence. The military said two Palestinians stabbed and wounded an Israeli soldier before troops shot and killed the pair.

Migrants' protest at Idomeni camp fizzles out

IDOMENI, Greece (AP)—A protest by hundreds of migrants, egged on by activists to demand that the border between Greece and Macedonia be opened, passed without any serious incidents on Sunday. However, it exposed rifts between different ethnic groups among the over 11,000 refugees and migrants stranded at this makeshift encampment, some for weeks, after Balkan countries on what used to be the busiest migrant route to central and northern Europe shut down their borders. The European Union has effectively approved this policy by signing a deal with Turkey that discourages war refugees from making the sea crossing from Turkey to Greece and ending the hopes of migrants from other countries of being admitted into Europe.

Iraqi cleric meets with PM after beginning Green Zone sit-in

BAGHDAD (AP)—Influential Iraqi Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr met with Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi Sunday night after beginning a sit-in in Baghdad's highly fortified Green Zone intended to be a show of force following his calls to combat government corruption. Earlier in the day security forces stepped aside to allow al-Sadr to enter the Green Zone after weeks of protests in the Iraqi capital. Al-Sadr has repeatedly called on al-Abadi to enact sweeping economic and political reforms. "I am a representative of the people and will enter the (Green Zone)," al-Sadr told hundreds of his supporters gathered outside the compound's walls, asking his followers to stay outside and remain peaceful.

Focus

AP EXCLUSIVE:

US remains in N. Korea lost in POLITICAL LIMBO

By ERIC TALMADGE
Associated Press

AP

In this Thursday, Dec. 3, 2015, photo, village elder Kim Ri Jun digs up a burlap sack which he claims contains the remains belonging to a soldier who fought in the Korean War from a burial site on Ryongyon-ri hill in Kujang county, North Korea. "Until They Are Home" is one of the most sacred vows of the U.S. military, yet there are 5,300 American GIs missing in North Korea from the Korean War whose remains are potentially recoverable. It has been more than a decade since any U.S. search teams have tried, and with construction projects across the country moving forward, many could already be lost forever.

RYONGYON-RI, North Korea (AP)—The village elder put his shovel aside, stooped down by a scraggly bush and pulled a sack from the freshly turned dirt. Spreading open the sack, he reached in to reveal femurs, skull and jaw fragments, boots and a rusted green helmet.

"These are your American GIs," Song Hong Ik said at a burial mound near the top of a small hill.

Perhaps they are. But for more than a decade, no one has been trying to find out.

"Until They Are Home" is one of the most sacred vows of the U.S. military, yet Washington has long suspended efforts to look for 5,300 American GIs missing in North Korea whose remains are potentially recoverable. The countries' abysmal relations suggest that no restart is coming soon.

In the meantime, possible remains and recovery sites are being lost as North Korea works to improve its infrastructure with projects such as the Chongchon River No. 10 Hydroelectric Power Station. The bones Song revealed came from that project's construction site.

His village, the hamlet of Ryongyon-ri, is nestled among low rolling hills in the heart of a Korean War battleground about 150 kilometers (almost 100 miles) north of Pyongyang. The 90-minute drive from the capital runs through mostly flat land covered by rice paddies or fields of corn and potatoes. The scene is quietly rustic. Farmers use oxcarts to transport produce and villagers can be seen walking in the distance on narrow dirt roads.

Not far from the highway that leads past the village, a shallow river runs through a wide valley. Song, polite but to the point, explained as he climbed the hill that the valley will be flooded when the dam is completed.

Song said construction on the plant, which involved a lot of digging, began in earnest four years ago.

That's when the bones started piling up, he said. Enough, he added, to fill a half-dozen makeshift burial mounds on the hill, maybe 70 or 100 sets in all.

He dug up a few other mounds to make his point. Then, after a smoke break, he and the plant's construction supervisor put the bones back in their bags and reburied them.

■■■

Between 1996 and 2005, joint U.S.-North Korea search teams conducted 33 joint recovery operations and recovered 229 sets of American remains. Washington broke them off because it claimed the safety of its searchers was not guaranteed. Critics of the program argued the North was using the deal to squeeze cash out of Washington—"bones for bucks," they said.

Talks to restart recovery work resumed in 2011, only to fall apart after North Korea launched a rocket condemned by the U.S. as a banned test of ballistic missile technology. There has been no progress since.

With distrust between the two countries chronically high, it took months of requests before The Associated Press was allowed to go to Ryongyon-ri, first last May with a Korean People's Army escort and again in December.

The AP made the requests because North Korea's state-run media have repeatedly said— without giving details—that with construction, agricultural and other infrastructure projects going forward, time is running out for the U.S. military to collect its Korean War dead.

In Washington, such claims are often seen as a not-so-subtle jab at the U.S. government for halting the searches, or an effort to guilt the U.S. into formal talks it has refused to engage in as long as Pyongyang continues its nuclear weapons program.

Pyongyang's approval of The AP's visits to Ryongyon-ri may have had similar political motivations. That's often how things work in North Korea, though an army official and villagers angrily denied that their reasons for allowing The AP to see the remains were anything other than humanitarian.

In any case, Washington isn't biting. And its war dead are not being brought home.

■■■

More than 7,800 U.S. troops remain lost and unrecovered from the Korean War. About 5,300 were lost in North Korea.

According to the Pentagon's Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, most died in major battles or as prisoners of war. Others died "along the wayside or in small villages" and many of the losses from aircraft crashes also occurred near battle zones or roads connecting them. "So," it says, "it is possible that major concentrations of human remains are located in these areas."

The DPAA lists Kujang County, where Ryongyon-ri is located, as part of a prime search area that could potentially yield 1,600 remains. The Chosin Reservoir, where another major campaign was fought, and POW camp burial grounds near the Chinese border are also priority sites.

"The Department of Defense is committed to achieving the fullest possible accounting," Lt. Col. Holly Slaughter, a DPAA spokeswoman, told The AP. "U.S. efforts to recover Korean War remains are a humanitarian effort for our missing servicemen, their families and the American people."

Even so, Maj. Natasha Waggoner, another spokeswoman for the agency, said there is no schedule "at this time" to hold talks to send any search teams back.

Until they do, the jury will remain out on the Ryongyon-ri remains.

It's impossible to judge the veracity of remains simply by looking at them. Only expert eyes and a long and difficult forensic identification process can do that. There were no dogtags, unit insignia or other identification clues mixed in with the remains seen by The AP.

Villagers acknowledged the remains were gathered haphazardly as construction progressed. It is quite possible, they said, the remains could include animal bones or the remains of combatants from other countries.

Villagers old enough to have witnessed the battle have sketchy memories, at best.

By the time the fighting came to their backyard, from mid-November to December 1950, most of the village, a scattering of about 30 households, had already been evacuated. Those who remained were mostly women, children and old people. The village was then known as Sangpyong.

"My aunt, uncle and grandfather were caught by the U.S. enemies, who beat them so they got sick and died," said Kim Ri Jun, who was then 13 years old.

Kim and Song had no information about specific units the troops were attached to. They did remember that many U.S. soldiers were African-American, and that troops from other countries, taking part in U.S.-led United Nations forces, were involved in the fighting as well.

The location and timeframe coincide with a major clash between the U.S. and its allies and the Chinese "volunteer" forces fighting on Pyongyang's side. The push north was known as the "Home by Christmas" campaign because Gen. Douglas MacArthur thought the war would be won by Christmas. Instead, it would last two and a half more years, end in a stalemate and claim 36,500 American lives.

The U.S. government has estimated as many as 270 sets of American remains are likely recoverable in Kujang County alone. Searching for them was one of the top priorities when the U.S. missions were still going to North Korea. Nearly a dozen joint searches were conducted in the area from 1998-2000.

But they ended long before the real digging in Ryongyon-ri began.

■■■

That any joint searches were held at all was almost miraculous. That they would break down seems much more predictable.

North Korea and the United States remain technically at war because the 1950-53 fighting ended with an armistice, not a peace treaty. Remains recovery is the only project their militaries have ever worked on together.

Relations were much better when the missions began.

Under President Bill Clinton, the two countries had signed an agreement for the North to freeze its illicit plutonium weapons program in exchange for aid. But that deal unraveled in 2002, the same year President George W. Bush declared North Korea part of the "axis of evil." The searches continued for a few more years, but bilateral relations took a nosedive. North Korea conducted its first nuclear test in 2006 and meaningful contact between the two countries has since been minimal.

Slaughter, of the DPAA, said the total cost to the U.S. to carry out the joint missions was $19.5 million. Of the 229 remains recovered, 110 have been identified. The recovery of remains has since ground to a halt—to only six, all unilaterally handed over to the U.S. by Pyongyang in 2007.

The impasse on a humanitarian—not political—issue doesn't sit well with some Korean War veterans.

"Those of us who fought there really feel it's a travesty that we haven't been able to get there and try to find those that were killed or died in the prison camps," said Larry Kinard, who fought in Korea with the Army's 3rd Infantry Division and is now president of the 15,000-member Korean War Veterans Association. He noted that since 1982 only 332 Korean War remains have been identified and accounted for.

Kinard told the AP from his home in Texas he is in regular contact with the DPAA and feels it is doing the best it can with limited resources and the challenges it faces of getting into North Korea to conduct searches.

But he added that is of little consolation to the families of the missing.

"Approximately 5,300 of our comrades still lie in the ground in North Korea and little or no effort is currently underway to recover them," he said. "The KWVA members, who average nearly 85 years old, want to see their fellow brothers-in-arms found, identified, brought home, and laid to rest in our country."

Song, meanwhile, said he had mixed feelings about gathering the bones of his enemy and moving them to the hill so that they wouldn't be lost when the valley is flooded.

"Frankly, I don't care if the Americans come or not," he said. "But they owe us a thank you for taking care of their dead."

Overdrive

AUTO REVIEW: Chevrolet's Camaro SS may be world's best sport coupe

By MARK PHELAN
DETROIT FREE PRESS

Lighter, faster and more sophisticated, the 2016 Chevrolet Camaro SS (I give it four out of four stars) breaks out of the pony car corral to outrun Thoroughbreds like the BMW M4 and Lexus RC F.

The days when people could dismiss the Camaro as a muscle car—fast, but uncouth—are over. The 2016 Camaro is new from the ground up, radically different and better, but still obviously a Chevrolet. It uses a lightweight architecture that also underpins a pair of world-class luxury sport sedans, the Cadillac ATS and CTS.

There's no visual similarity among the three cars, but they share some chassis structures and technologies. That helps explain how a $45,100 Chevy can offer an adaptive suspension that's more advanced than the $65,700 M4.

The M4, if you're among those bewildered by BMW's multiplicity of models, is the sport coupe previously known as the M3.

In addition to the M4, the 2016 Camaro competes with sport coupes like the Audi S5, Dodge Challenger SRT8, Ford Mustang GT and Lexus RC F. That's a small and elite group, and the Chevrolet leads it in many respects.

Camaro prices start at $25,700 for a base model powered by a new 275-horsepower turbocharged 2.0-liter four-cylinder engine. A six-speed manual transmission is standard on all Camaros. A quick-shifting eight-speed automatic is a $1,495 option. Moving up to a 335-horsepower 3.6-liter V-6 also costs $1,495.

The V-8 Camaro SS starts at $36,300. It comes with a 6.2-liter V-8 that produces 455 horsepower and 455 pound-feet of torque. Chevrolet also builds a Camaro convertible.

MCT
The Chevrolet Camaro SS sprints from 0-60 mph in 4.0 seconds.

I tested a well-equipped Camaro SS coupe with the manual transmission, Apple CarPlay, navigation, 4G LTE w-fi hotspot, blind spot alert, Bose audio, 20-inch five-spoke low-gloss black aluminum wheels, heated and ventilated front seats, heated steering wheel, head-up display, backup camera and more.

It stickered at $45,100. All prices exclude destination charges.

The Camaro SS costs thousands less than comparably equipped models of the S5, M3, Challenger SRT8 and RC F. Mustang GT prices are competitive.

Unable to leave well enough alone, Chevy will add a 640-horsepower ZL1 model with a supercharged SS V-8, six-speed manual or 10-speed automatic later this year.

We'll deal with the ZL1 when it arrives, assuming one slows down enough for us to catch a glimpse. Until then, we'll make do with the SS's M4-beating 4.0-second 0-60 time. Not to mention the Chevy's sharp steering, Velcro road holding, and four-piston Brembo brakes.

The Camaro SS looks great whether parked or at full tilt. Looking out of the low, wide sport coupe is another matter. Chevrolet has decided the Camaro's looks depend on a low roof, fast windshield, rising beltline and high deck. All those elements reduce visibility, to the point that nobody should buy a Camaro without the optional blind spot and cross traffic alerts. A backup camera is standard.

The front seat is comfortable, but without much storage for phones, glasses and the like. Rear legroom is minimal. The controls are big and legible. Chevrolet's combination of good voice recognition, a big touch screen, Apple CarPlay and convenient controls for volume, tuning and climate is outstanding.

The trunk is small but consistent with most cars in the segment. Its lid, however, is small and inconveniently located in the top of the rear deck. Many Camaro owners will probably use the small back seat as a parcel shelf for.

The SS V-8 generates more power than all the competitors except the RC F and Challenger SRT8. The lightweight chassis—about 230 pounds lighter than a manual transmission '15 SS—gives the SS the best power-top-weight ratio in the class.

The EPA rates the 2016 Camaro SS at 16 mpg in the city, 25 of the highway and 19 combined. The combined figure is 1 mpg worse than the S5 and M3, 2 mpg better than the Challenger SRT8 and matches the Mustang GT and RC F. The Mustang is the only one that gets its rated power and fuel economy with regular gasoline. The others all specify premium.

Classic looks, modern features and value combine to make the new Camaro a contender not just for best pony car, but for the best sport coupe in the world.

NUTS & BOLTS

Behind the Wheel 2016 Chevrolet Camaro SS

Rear-wheel-drive 2+2 sport coupe

- Price as tested: $45,100 (excluding destination charge)
- Rating: Four out of four stars
- Reasons to buy: Performance; looks; value
- Shortcomings: Visibility; rear leg room; trunk size
- Competitive EPA fuel economy ratings

(Manual transmission models where available)

- Chevrolet Camaro SS: 16 mpg city/25 highway/19 combined. Premium gasoline.
- Audi S5 Prestige: 17/26/20. Premium gasoline.
- BMW M4: 17/26/20. Premium gasoline.
- Dodge Challenger SRT8: 14/23/17. Premium gasoline.
- Ford Mustang GT Premium: 15/25/19. Regular gasoline.
- Lexus RC F (automatic transmission): 16/25/19. Premium gasoline.

Source: www.fueleconomy.gov

Comparative base prices (excluding destination charges)

(Manual transmission models where available)

- Chevrolet Camaro SS: $41,300
- Audi S5 Prestige: $53,100
- BMW M4: $65,700
- Dodge Challenger SRT8: $49,195
- Ford Mustang GT Premium: $36,395
- Lexus RC F (automatic transmission): $62,805

Source: Autotrader

Specifications as tested

- Engine: 6.2-liter 16-valve V-8
- Power: 455 horsepower @ 6,000 rpm; 455 pound-feet of torque @ 4,400 rpm
- Transmission: Six-speed manual
- Wheelbase: 110.7 inches
- Length: 188.3 inches
- Width: 74.7 inches
- Height: 53.1 inches
- Curb Weight: 3,668 pounds
- Where assembled: Lansing, Mich.

Key features on vehicle tested

- Standard equipment: Anti-lock brakes; stability control; curtain air bags; front seat side air bags; front seat knee air bags; Brembo 4-piston brakes; blind spot and cross traffic alerts; rear parking sensor; backup camera; battery rundown protection; active rev matching manual transmission; limited slip differential; capless fueling; run flat tires; engine oil cooler; HID headlamps; LED signature lights; LED tail lights; LED daytime running lights; power mirrors, locks and windows; pushbutton start; 8-way power driver seat; 6-way power passenger seat; heated and ventilated front seats; dual zone automatic climate control; heated steering wheel; Bose audio; head-up display; auto-dimming mirrors; memory for driver settings; lighted sill plates; wireless phone charger; 8-in. touch screen; interior spectrum lighting; Bluetooth phone and audio compatible; Apple CarPlay; 1 year XM satellite radio; 6 months OnStar navigation service; 4G LTE Wi-Fi hotspot

Options: Magnetic ride control; dual mode performance exhaust ceramic white interior accent trim package; 20-inch low-gloss black aluminum wheels; front license plate bracket.

UNDER THE HOOD: Fixing your van's flickering lights

By BRAD BERGHOLDT
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Q: I have a 2005 Dodge Grand Caravan that has an issue with its lights. The interior, dash and headlights all flicker. I have cleaned the battery cables, especially the ground. I have also added a ground from the battery to the body, but this has made no difference. The battery and alternator are good.

I have searched online and found this is a common problem, but no one has a fix, not even Dodge. Some say the problem is related to the battery terminal (ground). Others say it's the headlight switch. It gets expensive trying out different parts trying to figure this out.

We bought the van new, and it now has 155,000 miles and runs very well. I don't want to get rid of it. Would you have any idea why the lights are flickering? Is there a ground I may be missing somewhere?

--Stumped

A: I can propose a simple and accurate way to see if the electrical fault is on the positive or negative side of the headlight circuit. All you need is an inexpensive multimeter and about five minutes. My recommendation for a meter is a Sears model 82351, about $23. This little gem has amazingly useful features for the price. Any multimeter, even a Harbor Freight available for free with a coupon, meter will do nicely.

With the headlights on and flickering, set the meter to direct current volts and insert the meter's red probe tip into either the left headlamp's black and light blue wire connector cavity or the right side headlamps' black and light green wire connector—whichever is easier to get to (don't unplug anything). Next, we'll connect the meter's black lead to the Caravan's battery negative terminal. The meter will now display the voltage difference between these two places, which should be very small. A reading above 0.3 volts, especially if it's bouncing around, is trouble. Since both headlamps utilize separate grounds and you've doubled up the body's ground, this will probably check out fine.

Next, check the positive side for trouble. With the headlamps on (low beam) and flickering, connect the "difference meter" between the battery positive terminal and either headlamp's low beam positive wire (white and dark blue for left, white and tan for the right). Connect the red probe to battery positive and black probe tip to the headlamp's positive terminal for the desired polarity. My hunch is you'll see large and varying numbers here; 0.7 volts is the maximum recommended difference. Before jumping to the conclusion your integrated power module (the positive provider to the headlamps) is faulty, let's check a few more things. You mentioned the alternator is "good" but it may have a shorted diode, which can wreak havoc on the Caravan's electrical stability. If the lamp flickering only occurs with the engine running, this is a likely demon!

With the meter set this time to alternating current volts, let's measure between the very large wire terminal at the rear of the alternator and the battery negative terminal with the engine idling and headlamps on (clip on the leads before starting the engine and stay clear of the engine's parts as it's running). A meter reading of above 0.5 volts indicates diode trouble within the alternator.

If the positive side voltage drop of the headlamps checks high/noisy and the alternator checks OK, it's best to perform similar power and ground tests on the integrated power module before condemning it. Space doesn't allow me to list the somewhat trickier checks here. This device is built into the bottom half of the under-hood fuse box (left side fender area). Used replacements for the combined unit are plentiful at around $75.

What I described above in the first two procedures is a "voltage drop test." This is the most useful and easy to perform automotive diagnostic test one can do. Practice it, and you're ready for any electrical problem!

Life & Style

Wrong number? Trump's TV telephone interviews in spotlight

By DAVID BAUDER
AP TELEVISION WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—In television news, a telephone interview is typically frowned upon. Donald Trump's fondness for them is changing habits and causing consternation in newsrooms, while challenging political traditions.

Two organizations are circulating petitions to encourage Sunday morning political shows to hang up on Trump. Some prominent holdouts, like Fox's Chris Wallace, refuse to do on-air phoners. Others argue that a phone interview is better than no interview at all.

Except in news emergencies, producers usually avoid phoners because television is a visual medium—a face-to-face discussion between a newsmaker and questioner is preferable to a picture of an anchor listening to a disembodied voice.

AP

In this photo taken Dec. 2, 2015, Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump speaks during an interview with the Associated Press at the Trump National Golf Club in Sterling, Va.

It's easy to see why Trump likes them. There's no travel or TV makeup involved; if he wishes to, Trump can talk to Matt Lauer without changing out of his pajamas. They often put an interviewer at a disadvantage, since it's harder to interrupt or ask follow-up questions, and impossible to tell if a subject is being coached.

Face-to-face interviews let viewers see a candidate physically react to a tough question and think on his feet, said Chris Licht, executive producer of "CBS This Morning." Sometimes that's as important as what is being said.

Trump tends to take over phone interviews and can get his message out with little challenge, Wallace said.

"The Sunday show, in the broadcast landscape, I feel is a gold standard for probing interviews," said Wallace, host of "Fox News Sunday." ''The idea that you would do a phone interview, not face-to-face or not by satellite, with a presidential —I'd never seen it before, and I was quite frankly shocked that my competitors were doing it."

Since Trump announced his candidacy in June 2015, Wallace has conducted three in-person interviews with him on "Fox News Sunday," and four via satellite.

Chuck Todd, host of NBC's "Meet the Press," has done phoners with Trump but now said he's decided to stick to in-person interviews on his Sunday show. He's no absolutist, though.

"It's a much better viewer experience when it's in person," Todd said. "Satellite and phoners are a little harder, there's no doubt about it. But at the end of the day, you'll take something over nothing."

Morning news shows do phoners most frequently. At the outset of the campaign, Trump was ratings catnip. The ratings impact of a Trump interview has since settled down, but it's still hard to turn him down. He's the leading contender for the Republican presidential nomination. He's news.

There appear to be no network policies; different shows on the same network have different philosophies. Licht has turned Trump down for phoners on CBS but concedes there may be exceptions for breaking news. "CBS This Morning," in fact, aired Trump commenting by phone following Tuesday's attack in Belgium.

Since the campaign began, Trump has appeared for 29 phone interviews on the five Sunday political panel shows, according to the liberal watchdog Media Matters for America. Through last Sunday, ABC's "This Week" has done it 10 times, CBS' "Face the Nation" seven and six times each on "Meet the Press" and CNN's "State of the Union."

On Sunday, Trump phoned in an 11th time to "This Week," calling from Florida. The program repeatedly flashed a stock Trump photo while the candidate demanded an overhaul of NATO, blamed rival Ted Cruz for the bitter feud targeting each other's wife and complained about the Republican Party's delegate selection process.

None of the news shows have done phoners with Cruz, John Kasich, Hillary Clinton or Bernie Sanders, said Media Matters, which is urging that the practice be discontinued. Cruz and Clinton declined ABC's invitation to speak by phone or in person for the network's most recent Sunday program.

The activist group MomsRising said the disparity "sends the message that some candidates can play by different rules, without consequences, and that's just un-American." A study by mediaQuant and The New York Times estimated that Trump has received the equivalent of $1.9 billion in free advertising given the media attention paid to his campaign.

A Trump spokeswoman did not return a request for comment.

What's unclear is whether other candidates were denied opportunities given to Trump.

CNN chief executive Jeff Zucker said Trump opponents frequently turn down interview requests. During an appearance on CNN last week, former GOP candidate Carly Fiorina complained about media attention paid to Trump, leading Anderson Cooper to shoot back: "Donald Trump returned phone calls and was willing to do interviews, which was something your campaign, frankly, was unwilling to do."

Cruz spokeswoman Catherine Frazier tweeted last week that she saw Trump being interviewed via phone on "Fox & Friends" a day after Cruz was told that he couldn't do a phone interview with the show.

Fox said that since then, "Fox & Friends" has offered to conduct a phone interview with Cruz five times and has been turned down each time. Cruz did appear in the studio Wednesday. Frazier did not return requests for comment.

NBC's Todd believes that complaints about phoners are a surrogate for people who want to blame the media for Trump's success.

Pushy parents create mess at Easter egg hunts

What's supposed to be a cherished Easter tradition turned into a mess after pushy parents caused a scene at egg hunts over the weekend.

Saturday's event at the visitor center of candy company Pez in Orange, Connecticut, drew hundreds of people, some of whom ignored the rules.

"Everyone just rushed the field and took everything," Pez General Manager Shawn Peterson told WFSB-TV.

Event organizers placed more than 9,000 eggs on three fields with the intention of having staggered start times for each age group. But Pez officials say parents didn't wait.

Peterson said the crowd was "kind of like locusts."

Pez in a statement apologized for "an unfortunate situation," adding that the actions of a few turned the event into "a mess."

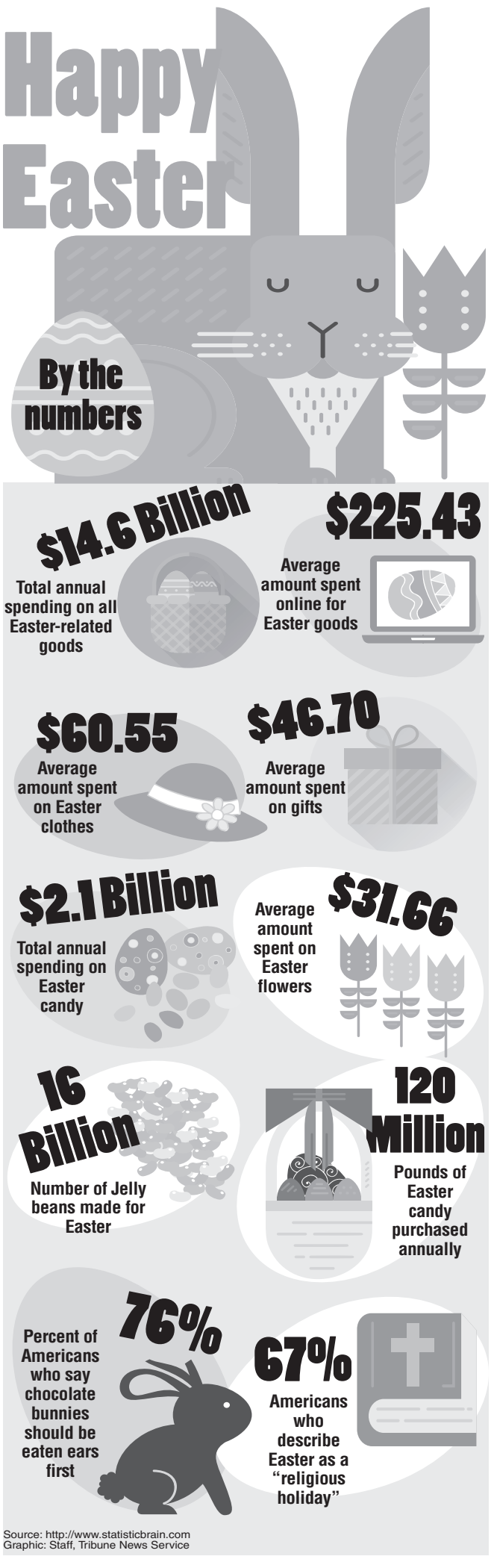
"We sincerely tried our best to create a fun, free activity for everyone to enjoy," the statement said.

People who attended the hunt took to Facebook to comment, calling it "a joke" and blaming "greedy parents" for ruining the hunt. The event ended early. No injuries were reported.

In Proctor, Vermont, police were called to an overbooked Easter egg hunt Saturday at Wilson Castle after someone reported "multiple irate parents." Organizers say more than 1,200 people turned out for the event.

Michael Cuthbertson, 34, of Newbury, Vermont, turned his anger toward police, allegedly threatening them before fleeing. A foot chase ensued, and police used pepper spray to subdue him. He was charged with disorderly conduct and resisting arrest.

Cuthbertson did not immediately return a call seeking comment. ***(AP)***


Happy Easter
By the numbers
$14.6 Billion
Total annual spending on all Easter-related goods
$225.43
Average amount spent online for Easter goods
$60.55
Average amount spent on Easter clothes
$46.70
Average amount spent on gifts
$2.1 Billion
Total annual spending on Easter candy
$31.66
Average amount spent on Easter flowers
16 Billion
Number of Jelly beans made for Easter
120 Million
Pounds of Easter candy purchased annually
76%
Percent of Americans who say chocolate bunnies should be eaten ears first
67%
Americans who describe Easter as a "religious holiday"
Source: http://www.statisticbrain.com
Graphic: Staff, Tribune News Service

Life & Style

'Batman v Superman' shrugs off bad reviews, opens to $170M

AP
This image released by Warner Bros. Entertainment shows Henry Cavill as Superman, left, Gal Gadot as Wonder Woman and Ben Affleck as Batman in a scene from "Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice."

NEW YORK (AP)—Faster than a speeding bullet and impervious to lousy reviews, the superhero faceoff "Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice" rebounded from a smack down from critics to debut with a massive $170.1 million in North America, the sixth best opening of all-time.

The stakes were high for the Warner Bros. release, which cost $250 million to make and about $150 million to market. But the studio's bid to launch a DC Comics universe to rival Marvel's empire was met with persistent PR pains and numerous changes in the release date.

It fought skepticism over Ben Affleck's casting as Batman and a barrage of bad reviews earlier in the week. Things were bad enough to spawn a ubiquitous viral video of "Sad Ben Affleck," which took the actor's response to the reviews and scored it with Simon & Garfunkel's "The Sound of Silence."

But the allure of seeing two of the most iconic superheroes battle it out was enough to set a record for the best pre-summer debut. "Batman v Superman" also grossed $254 million overseas, bringing its global total to $424.1 million for the weekend.

The mighty debut was met with a huge sigh of relief by Warner Bros. which invested its full marketing power in "Batman v Superman." The film, directed by Zack Snyder, is the first of 10 DC Comics adaptations planned by the studio over the next five years. Along with pitting Henry Cavill's Superman against Batman, it introduces a number of other heroes soon to get starring roles, including Wonder Woman (Gal Gadot) and the Flash (Ezra Miller).

Audiences gave the film a mediocre B CinemaScore, which suggested some moviegoers agreed with critics. But many fans (a good number of whom bought tickets well in advance) were undeterred.

"There was a disconnect there between what critics wrote and the fan interest," said Jeff Goldstein, head of distribution for Warner Bros. "What we're seeing is a huge amount of repeat business."

"Batman v Superman" dominated Easter weekend with the kind of blockbuster performance usually reserved for Memorial Day or July 4th. In second was the Disney Animation hit "Zootopia," with $23.1 million in its fourth week of domestic release. The go-to family release of the season, it has earned nearly $700 million globally. Universal's "My Big Fat Greek Wedding 2," a sequel to the 2002 hit romantic comedy, debuted with $18.1 million—effective counterprogramming to the male-centric "Batman v Superman."

Opening well above the $116.6 million debut of Snyder's Superman reboot "Man of Steel," ''Batman v Superman" again proved that among comic-book heroes, Batman (who took first billing from Superman, naturally) is second to none. The opening surpasses previous Batman installments "The Dark Knight Rises" ($160.9 million) and "The Dark Knight" ($158.4 million).

"It proves that the concept is bigger than negative reviews," said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for comScore. "There was no way that if you're a comic book fan or just a movie fan that you're going to miss out on a match-up of such iconic characters. Audiences have to see the movie for themselves."

The big weekend also breaks a poor stretch for Warner Bros., which was hobbled by a number of underperforming releases like "In the Heart of the Sea," ''Pan" and "Point Break." If the estimate Sunday holds, "Batman v Superman" will be Warner Bros.' best opening ever, topping "Harry Potter and Deathly Hallows Part 2" ($169.2 million).

"We all know that studios have dips and you can't hit it out of the ballpark every time, although we try," Goldstein said. "And we had a little bit of a dip in 2015, no question. We always believed in our upcoming slate. We knew it was just a matter of getting to the films."

Whether word-of-mouth will be good enough to help "Batman v Superman" maintain its record-setting pace in the coming weeks remains to be seen, but the March release date means it will have little competition. The film soaked up IMAX, 3-D and large-format screens, drawing a 62 percent male audience.

"At the end of the day, a superhero movie can be a box-office superhero any month of the year," Dergarabedian said. "For Warner Bros., this is a seminal moment. It proves how quickly fortunes can rise and fall based on your slate of films. This was a bet that paid off really big for the studio."

Warner Bros. will hope the success continues for its next DC Comics property, the all-villain team-up film "Suicide Squad," due out in August. Marvel and the Walt Disney Co. may also have been eyeing the result of "Batman v Superman" with interest. Their next installment comes in May with "Captain America: Civil War," which likewise pits two heroes (Iron Man and Captain America) against each other.

Such a clash may feel like a repeat to moviegoers. More likely, "Batman v Superman" whetted appetites for more superhero-on-superhero violence.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to comScore. Where available, the latest international numbers for Friday through Sunday are also included. Final domestic figures will be released Monday.

1. **"Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice,"** $170.1 million ($254 million international).
2. **"Zootopia,"** $23.1 million ($42.5 million international).
3. **"My Big Fat Greek Wedding 2,"** $18.1 million ($8 million international).
4. **"Miracles From Heaven,"** $9.5 million.
5. **"The Divergent Series: Allegiant,"** $9.5 million ($9.5 million international).
6. **"10 Cloverfield Lane,"** $6 million ($2.5 million international).
7. **"Deadpool,"** $5 million ($3 million international).
8. **"London Has Fallen,"** $2.9 million ($4 million international).
9. **"Hello, My Name Is Doris,"** $1.7 million.
10. **"Eye in the Sky,"** $1 million.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at international theaters (excluding the U.S. and Canada), according to comScore:

1. **"Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice,"** $254 million.
2. **"Zootopia,"** $42.5 million.
3. **"Kung Fu Panda 3,"** $21.5 million.
4. **"The Divergent Series: Allegiant,"** $9.5 million.
5. **"The Revenant,"** $8.7 million.
6. **"My Big Fat Greek Wedding 2,"** $8 million.
7. **"London Has Fallen,"** $4 million.
8. **"Kapoor & Sons,"** $3.8 million.
9. **"Deadpool,"** $3 million.
10. **"10 Cloverfield Lane,"** $2.5 million.

After 75 years, Wonder Woman gets her big screen due

BURBANK, Calif. (AP)—She might not get top billing in "Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice," or even very much screen time, but Wonder Woman still manages to steal the show from her caped counterparts in the superhero spectacle.

It's not a moment too soon either. Despite the popular 1970s television series starring Lynda Carter, this is the first time the lasso-wielding crusader has been in major live-action film. And it's all a setup for her own stand-alone feature coming in 2017 from director Patty Jenkins.

Tasked with playing the Amazonian warrior is 30-year-old Gal Gadot—a model who stumbled into acting when an agent spotted her photo and asked her to audition for a Bond girl role. She didn't get it, but it did eventually lead to a role in the fifth and sixth "Fast & Furious" movies as the ill-fated fan favorite Gisele. Gravity defying car franchise aside, Gadot was still a relative unknown when she was announced as the new Wonder Woman in 2013.

And, like many casting decisions involving beloved characters, hers was not met warmly. Many complained that the former Miss Israel was simply too thin. An early photo of her in the gladiator-inspired Wonder Woman costume assuaged some concerns. By that point, Gadot had gone through nine months of rigorous training focusing on martial arts and sword work to get into Wonder Woman shape. It wasn't much of a stretch either, considering Gadot served as a combat instructor in the Israeli army for two years.

Gadot has kept an even temper about the chatter from the start.

"Being an actress, my responsibility is to not pay too much attention to all the noise around me, but to pay attention to the script, to the director, and protect the character," Gadot told reporters recently.

At 5 feet 10 inches, Gadot is a striking presence both in person and on the screen. In the film, seen first as Diana Prince, her outrageous cool and skintight asymmetrical frocks turn the heads of many characters—Ben Affleck's Bruce Wayne included.

"Gal is so mysterious and sexy and interesting and strong that whenever she's on-screen I think there's definitely a projection for men who think, 'Well I want to flirt with her,'" Affleck said. "I think she provokes in the audience the desire to be flirted with."

While her introduction might be predicated on her glamorous image, her power is what makes her stand out, and "Batman v Superman" gives a little preview of her fighting skills, too.

"She brings something particular, something statuesque, something otherworldly to the character," said Henry Cavill, who plays Superman. "It's remarkable to see."

As the mother of a 4-year-old girl who loves princesses but often complains about how the princes are always saving them, Gadot is especially excited to be bringing this character to life.

"I'm so happy to be the one who is going to tell the Wonder Woman story," Gadot said. "It's so important for girls and boys to have a strong female superhero to look up to."

"Batman v Superman" is a tease of an introduction to the character whose story will be explored more in "Wonder Woman," which is currently in production for release next year. Gadot stars alongside Robin Wright, Connie Nielsen and Chris Pine.

"I think it's about time to have a strong female energy projected into the world," Pine said earlier this year.

Not only is it Wonder Woman's first film, but it's also the first major film of this new era of interconnected superhero franchises to focus on a woman—beating "Captain Marvel" to theaters by a year.

As for Gadot, although she's happy to be one of the first, she doesn't want to be the only one either.

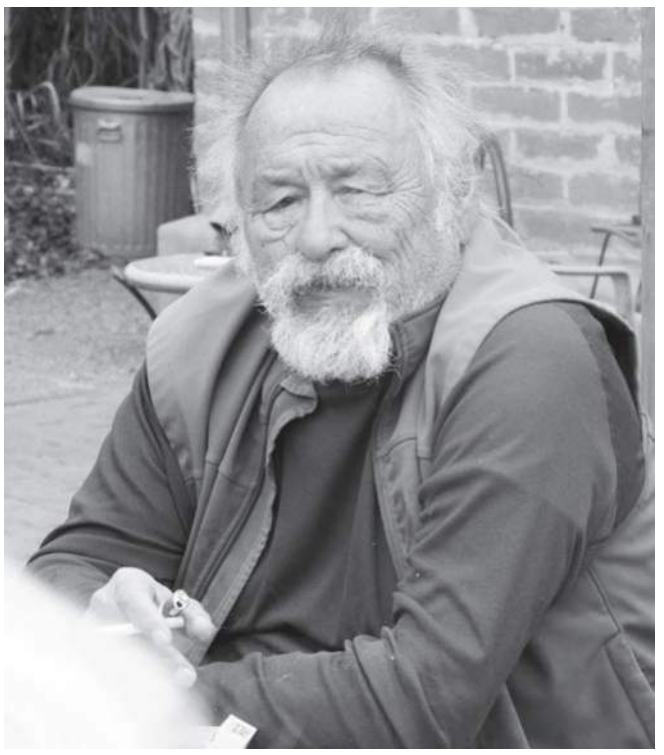
"The more the merrier," she said. "There's plenty of room for many more women to come."

'Legends of the Fall' author Jim Harrison dead at 78

NEW YORK (AP)—Jim Harrison, the fiction writer, poet, outdoorsman and reveler who wrote with gruff affection for the country's landscape and rural life and enjoyed mainstream success in middle age with his historical saga "Legends of the Fall," has died at age 78.

Spokeswoman Deb Seager of Grove Atlantic, Harrison's publisher, told The Associated Press that Harrison died Saturday at his home in Patagonia, Arizona. Seager did not know the cause of death. Harrison's wife of more than 50 years, Linda King Harrison, died last fall.

The versatile and prolific author completed more than 30 books, most recently the novella collection "The Ancient Minstrel," and was admired worldwide. Sometimes likened to Ernest Hemingway for the range and kinds of his interests, he was a hunter and fisherman who savored his time in a cabin near his Michigan hometown, a drinker and Hollywood scriptwriter who was close friends with Jack Nicholson and came to know Sean Connery, Orson Welles and Warren Beatty among others. He was a sports writer and a man of extraordinary appetite who once polished off a 37-course lunch, a traveler and teller of tales, most famously "Legends of the Fall."



AP

This photo provided by George Mason & Salli Slaughter shows Jim Harrison at his home in Patgonia, Ariz.

"His voice came from the American heartland and his deep and abiding love of the American landscape runs through his extraordinary body of work," Grove Atlantic publisher and CEO Morgan Entrekin said in statement Sunday.

Published in 1979, "Legends of the Fall" was a collection of three novellas that featured the title story about Montana rancher Col. William Ludlow and his three sons of sharply contrasting personalities and values, the narrative extending from before World War I to the mid-20th century, from San Francisco to Singapore.

"Late in October 1914 three brothers rode from Choteau, Montana to Calgary, Alberta to enlist in the Great War," reads Harrison's celebrated opening sentence, which author Vance Bourjaily would praise for establishing "both the voice and manner of the epic storyteller, who deals in great vistas and vast distances."

The book was a best-seller, and Harrison worked on the script for an Oscar-nominated 1994 film of the same name starring Brad Pitt, Anthony Hopkins and Aidan Quinn. Harrison's screenplay credits also included "Revenge," starring Kevin Costner, and the Nicholson film "Wolf." But he would liken the unpredictable and nerve wracking process to being trapped in a "shuddering elevator" and reminded himself of his marginal status by inscribing a putdown by a Hollywood executive, "You're just a writer," on a piece of paper and taping it above his desk.

Harrison could have been a superb character actor, a bearded, burly man with a disfigured left eye and a smoker's rasp who confided that when out in public with Nicholson he was sometimes mistaken for the actor's bodyguard. Erudite enough to write reviews for The New York Times and to quote Wallace Stevens from memory, he also had a strong affinity for physical labor and a history of writing stories for and about men.

"My characters aren't from the urban dream-coasts," he told The Paris Review in 1986. "A man is not a foreman on a dam project because he wants to be macho. That's his job, a job he's evolved into.

"How is it macho that I like to hunt and fish? I've been doing it since I was four."

SIDEBAR

Things to know about author Jim Harrison, who died at age 78

NEW YORK (AP)—Here are some things to know about Jim Harrison, who died Saturday at age 78:

PROLIFIC WRITER

He wrote nearly 40 books, most famously "Legends of the Fall," and was an accomplished fiction writer, poet and essayist. Besides "Legends of the Fall," a collection of three novellas, his books included the novels "Dalva" and "The Big Seven" and the poetry collection "Plain Song."

FAMOUS FRIENDS

His author friends included Tom McGuane and Phil Caputo, and he was close to Jack Nicholson, whose loan of $15,000 enabled him to finish "Legends of the Fall." He met Nicholson through McGuane, who wrote the screenplay for the 1976 Nicholson-Marlon Brando movie "The Missouri Breaks." Others he met in Hollywood included Warren Beatty, Sean Connery and Orson Welles.

ENDLESSLY QUOTABLE

He lived hard and was endlessly quotable, beginning his poem "Barking" with the lines: The moon comes up/The moon goes down/This is to inform you/that I didn't die young." A sign outside his farm in Michigan read: "DO NOT ENTER THIS DRIVEWAY UNLESS YOU HAVE CALLED FIRST. THIS MEANS YOU."

BEARDED AND BURLY

Fans knew him not just for his bulky physique and copious facial hair but for his blind left eye, injured at age 7 when a neighborhood girl jammed a bottle in his face. He joked that some mistook him for Nicholson's bodyguard. A Paris Review story from 1988 noted he also had been likened to a beer salesman and a sumo wrestler.

HOLLYWOOD CREDITS

His screenplay credits included the film version of "Legends of the Fall," which starred Brad Pitt and Anthony Hopkins. While working on movies, he reminded himself of his marginal status in Hollywood by inscribing a putdown from an executive, "You're just a writer," on a piece of paper and taping it above his desk.

Woman sues polygamy reality TV show crew for trespassing

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—A Utah woman who is part of a polygamous group alleges that makers of a reality TV show barged into her house without permission and pressured her daughter into being in a series about people leaving polygamy.

Susan Nelson alleges in the federal lawsuit that her daughter was offered $5,000 per episode to appear in "Escaping Polygamy," which was being filmed in Utah.

The lawsuit states that a cameraman trespassing at Nelson's house in a Salt Lake City suburb in December 2014 filmed two women trying to persuade her daughter to leave. After initially agreeing to participate, her daughter had second thoughts and didn't want to leave that day, the lawsuit states. Nelson's daughter was a young adult at the time.

The events of that day appeared in an episode that aired in July 2015 on the A&E network's LMN channel.

The two companies being sued—A&E Network and RIVR Media—declined comment on the allegations through company spokespeople. RIVR Media produces the show.

The series follows three sisters who left a northern Utah-based polygamous group, the Kingstons, over a decade ago. They now try to help others leave what they consider an abusive lifestyle.

It is one of several polygamy-related reality TV shows produced in recent years. The most well-known is TLC's long-running "Sister Wives," which follows the life of Kody Brown and his four wives. The Browns belong to a different polygamy group.

The Kingstons, who have made headlines because of teens who fled arranged marriages, are also known as the Davis County Cooperative Society. The group is not affiliated with Warren Jeffs' polygamous sect on the Utah-Arizona border.

The lawsuit claims that even after the cast members and cameraman left the house, they stayed on the property and tried filming her and her daughter through the window.

Brother's sudden death prompts single mother to be prepared

DEAR ABBY: My 29-year-old brother died suddenly last month. It was completely unexpected. He left behind a wife and 1-year-old son.

Although they lived across the country, she allowed us to bring him home for his funeral and burial. I took care of a lot of the arrangements on this end, while she took care of things there and made travel arrangements.

At 26, I never expected to be planning a funeral! But it has made me realize how unprepared I was for any unforeseen event. Please remind your young readers that it's never too early to take care of some basic plans, including a will. As a single mother, I know how unprepared I was if something should happen to me. While it's not a pleasant thought, it's tougher on the survivors if nothing is in place. When it comes to mortality, it's better to be practical and prepared.

STILL GRIEVING, BUT NOW PREPARED

DEAR STILL GRIEVING: Please accept my sympathy for the untimely loss of your brother. I can only imagine how shocking this has been for your family.

Mortality isn't a subject that younger people usually dwell on. But if they want what they have to be distributed according to their wishes, or if there are children involved, it's important to put their wishes in writing regardless of their age.

Readers: This includes what you would or would not like done if you can't speak for yourself. Do you want to be on artificial life support if there is no hope for your recovery? How do you feel about becoming an organ donor? Put it in writing!

I read recently about a young woman whose family learned only after her tragic death that she wanted to be an organ donor. Fortunately, they found out BEFORE the funeral.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: "Don" and I have been married for 44 years, and our marriage has had its ups and downs. We are now both retired. The problem is that Don does not get along with our 43-year-old son, "Chris." (He gets along fine with our two daughters.)

Don and Chris have very different personalities and little in common. Chris lives abroad but visits frequently and stays with us. During his most recent visit, his father was distant and rude to him. It has happened before and is hurtful to Chris and to me.

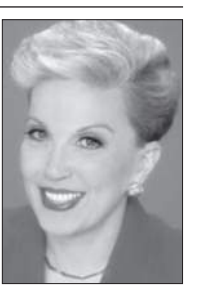
I have tried speaking with my husband about it, but he never has a good reason for his behavior. When my mother heard what happened, she got angry and said if I don't divorce Don, she doesn't want to see either of us again. Please help me. I don't know what to do.

HURT BADLY IN OREGON

DEAR HURT BADLY: After 40 years of marriage, you should have learned by now not to confide your problems in your mother. That your husband seems incapable of tolerating his son because of "personality differences" is regrettable, but hardly a cause for divorce at this point.

If Chris stayed in a hotel during his visits rather than your home, it would provide less opportunity for confrontation, and you both might enjoy the visits more. I hope you will consider it.

DEAR ABBY
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



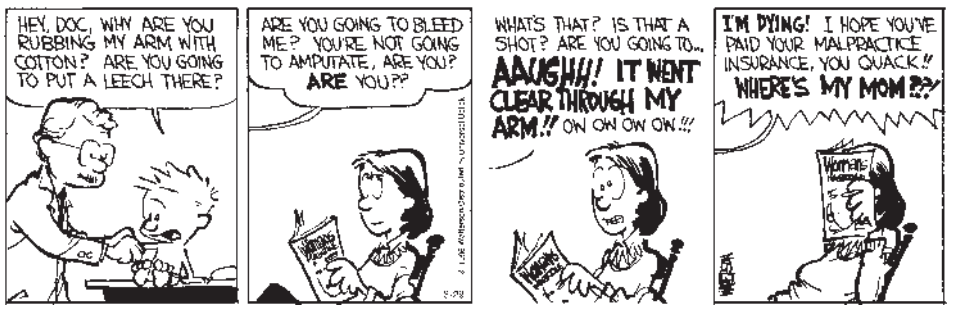
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable—and most frequently requested—poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Pastimes

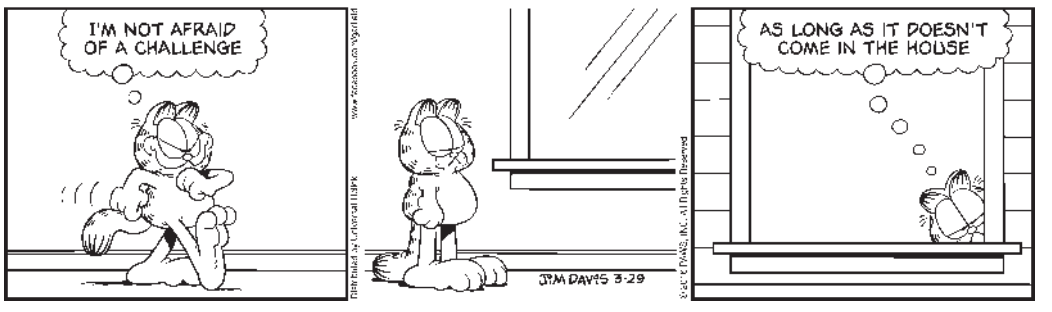
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


HEY, DOC, WHY ARE YOU RUBBING MY ARM WITH COTTON? ARE YOU GOING TO PUT A LEECH THERE?
ARE YOU GOING TO BLEED ME? YOU'RE NOT GOING TO AMPUTATE, ARE YOU? ARE YOU??
WHAT'S THAT? IS THAT A SHOT? ARE YOU GOING TO... AAUGHH! IT WENT CLEAR THROUGH MY ARM!! ON ON ON ON!!!
I'M DYING! I HOPE YOU'VE PAID YOUR MALPRACTICE INSURANCE, YOU QUACK!! WHERE'S MY MOM???

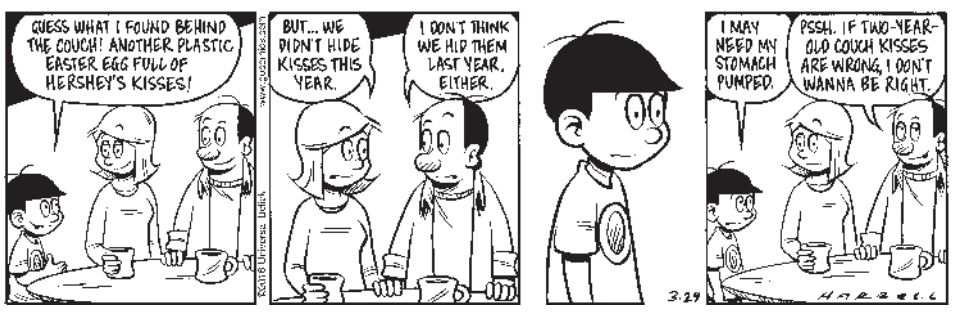
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



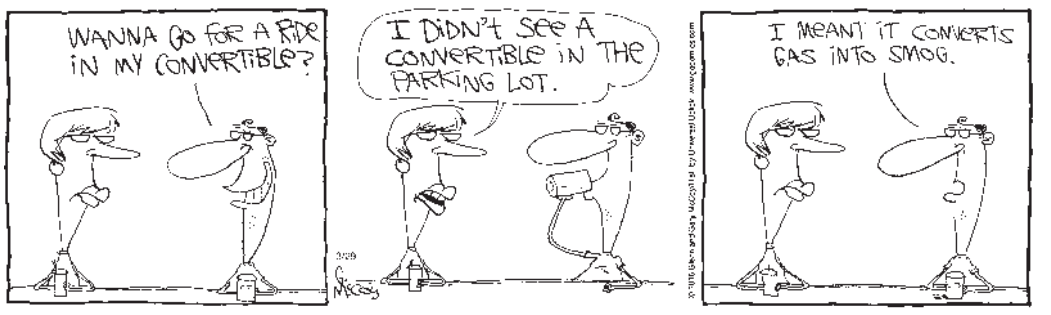
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


GUESS WHAT I FOUND BEHIND THE COUCH! ANOTHER PLASTIC EASTER EGG FULL OF HERSHEY'S KISSES!
BUT... WE DIDN'T HIDE KISSES THIS YEAR.
I DON'T THINK WE HID THEM LAST YEAR, EITHER.
I MAY NEED MY STOMACH PUMPED.
PSSH. IF TWO-YEAR-OLD COUCH KISSES ARE WRONG, I DON'T WANNA BE RIGHT.
3-29

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

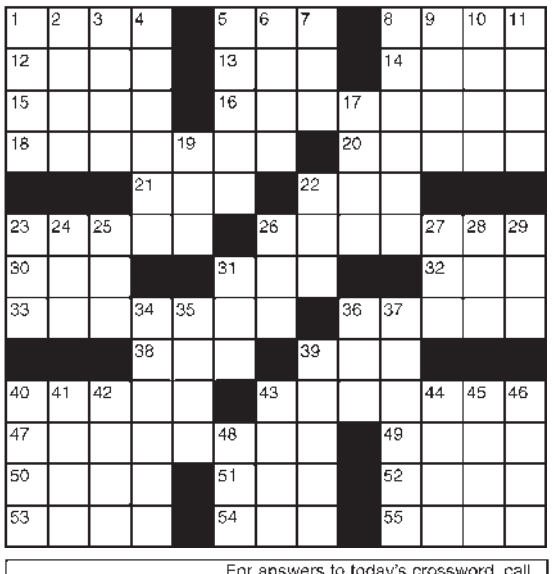
ACROSS
1 Heath
5 Greek mountain
8 Expansive
12 Roof overhang
13 Silent assent
14 Within (Pref.)
15 Synagogue
16 Leader of a state
18 Cigar holder
20 Lathered up
21 Dig in
22 Actor McKellen
23 Treat as a god
26 Slumlike condition
30 Trojans' sch.
31 That guy's
32 Acapulco gold
33 Earth circler
36 Horse-drawn carriage
38 Sass
39 Big shot
40 Rush
43 The Duke of —
47 Michigan city
49 Tiny bit
50 Swizzle
51 Gerund suffix
52 Singer Perry
53 Favorites
54 Ring decision
55 Cupid's alias

DOWN
1 Netting
2 Pearl Harbor site
3 Egg
4 Aspirin's promise
5 Gold mold
6 Entryway
7 Adj. modifier
8 Romeo's city
9 "— Karenina"
10 Desist
11 Whig's rival
17 Isaac's eldest
19 Calendar box
22 Mensa stats
23 Payable
24 Atty.'s title
25 Hosp. area
26 Knightly address
27 Journal
28 Assoc.
29 Trigger's rider
31 Jump
34 Hitching posts?
35 Level
36 Crib
37 "Rabbit, Run" author
39 Leo's follower
40 Padlock fastener
41 Initial chip
42 Tizzy
43 Policy expert
44 Fly high
45 "Beetle Bailey" dog
46 Beams
48 Morsel

Solution time: 22 mins.

S	I	A	M		A	L	B		O	B	I	S
A	C	M	E		R	I	M		O	■	D	E
R	A	I	D		B	L	O	W	H	O	L	E
I	N	D	I	G	O	■	C	O	I	N	E	D
■	■	■	C	A	R	P	■	E	N	D	■	■
J	U	B	I	L	E	E	S	■	G	I	L	T
E	S	L	■	S	A	N	T	A	■	E	A	R
B	O	O	P	■	I	A	R	G	F	S	S	F
■	■	S	A	P	■	L	E	E	R	■	■	■
A	U	S	S	I	E	■	S	E	S	A	M	E
B	L	O	T	T	E	R	S	■	A	■	A	S
I	N	M	E	■	L	I	E	■	I	O	W	S
T	A	S	S	■	S	O	S	■	Z	E	R	O

Yesterday's answer 3-29



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Megan Hilty, 35; Lucy Lawless, 48; Amy Sedaris, 55; Eric Idle, 73.

Happy Birthday: What are you waiting for? Take the initiative and be the one to make things happen. Your desire to be one step ahead of everyone else should motivate you to reach your mark. Do your best to eliminate deadweight and work at identifying what is instrumental in your plans for progress. Pick and choose wisely in love and in business. Your numbers are 3, 15, 21, 23, 28, 32, 43.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Share what you have to offer and you will find a way to turn an idea into a moneymaking venture. Problems with institutions and government agencies will surface if you have neglected to take care of your personal finances. ✪✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Be the driving force behind an idea. Take action—an opportunity will not last forever. A personal relationship is best handled with care. Offer love and affection, but don't feel the need to overspend to hold someone's interest. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): A constructive approach to getting things done is a better option than getting into an argument with someone. Uncertainty will result in a make-or-break standoff that is best dealt with honestly. A subtle change is favored. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Take care of your interests and avoid worrying about what everyone else is doing. You can make headway if you stay focused and use your resources to bring about the changes you want to see happen at work or at home. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Travel, communication and bringing attention to the things you want to see happen will lean in your favor. Choose your course of action instead of following someone who makes questionable offers. Personal change will be gratifying. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): You'll have lots of options, so wait and see what transpires and choose what works best for you. Not everyone will agree with you, but for now it's best to look out for yourself. Be cautious regarding partnerships. ✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Change will give you a new lease on life. A day trip or reconnecting with old friends will open your eyes to a personal situation you are facing. Explore your options and prepare to take a leap of faith. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Believe in your ability to see through what others do and say. Your insight will help you make superior choices when it comes to both helping others and reaching your own goals. Romance will bring you joy and greater stability. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Home is the best place to be. Bring about the changes that will make your life more convenient. Travel is best kept to a minimum for now. Avoid daring or risky adventures. Protect against insult and injury. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Look for opportunities that suit you, and try not to get involved in ventures that deal with people you cannot trust or count on to do their part. Someone from your past will tamper with your emotions if you aren't careful. You can't buy love. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): An investment or job prospect looks inviting. Bring about a change that will free up enough time to get involved in something that entices you. Good fortune can be yours if you are willing to put in the time. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Problems will surface with people in authoritative positions or those from a different cultural background. Clear up any confusion that arises before things escalate. Honesty and a concise explanation along with compassion and understanding will help you maintain your integrity. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are proud, adventurous and independent. You are daring and willful.

*Eugenia's website—**eugenialast.com**, Eugenia's android app @ **http://bit.ly/exhoro** and join Eugenia on **twitter/facebook/linkedin**.*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

				4				
		2	7	8	1	9		
	9						2	
	5			6			1	
3	2		1		4		7	6
	7			2			4	
	4						5	
		1	5	7	3	2		
				9				

Difficulty Level ★★ 3/29

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

9	6	1	2	4	3	5	7	8
8	4	2	7	1	5	6	9	3
5	7	3	6	8	9	4	2	1
7	8	6	3	2	4	1	5	9
3	9	4	1	5	7	8	6	2
2	1	5	8	9	6	3	4	7
6	3	9	5	7	8	2	1	4
1	5	7	4	3	2	9	8	6
4	2	8	9	6	1	7	3	5

Difficulty Level ★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

OKLAHOMA'S CREEK TURNPIKE Solution: 7 letters

E	G	N	A	H	C	R	E	T	N	I	S	S	U	E
T	V	A	Y	A	W	T	L	E	B	R	I	D	G	E
A	R	I	P	E	T	U	O	R	C	O	U	N	T	Y
T	E	A	R	L	E	L	I	M	S	T	R	E	E	T
S	I	Z	N	D	U	F	A	I	R	O	A	K	S	S
R	R	A	H	S	L	P	W	N	E	N	I	P	R	O
E	R	L	T	C	P	A	A	U	L	A	F	Ⓔ	O	C
T	A	P	O	R	G	O	I	S	H	L	Ⓛ	X	G	I
N	B	I	T	O	U	A	N	R	L	Ⓜ	O	I	E	T
I	N	I	N	S	G	C	T	D	O	U	W	T	R	Y
S	T	E	K	S	A	B	K	E	E	M	T	S	S	J
T	R	A	V	E	L	E	R	S	S	R	E	H	N	E
S	W	D	E	X	E	L	P	I	T	L	U	M	G	N
E	S	R	A	C	I	F	F	A	R	T	A	Y	I	K
W	I	L	L	R	A	M	P	I	K	E	P	A	S	S

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Barrier, Baskets, Beltway, Bridge, Cars, City, Coins, Cost, County, East, Elm, Exits, Fair Oaks, Flow, Gates, Haikey, Interchange, Interstate, Issue, Jenks, Memorial Drive, Mile, Multiplexed, Pikepass, Pine, Plaza, Ramp, Rogers, Route, Sapulpa, Signs, Street, Terminus, Toll, Traffic, Transponder, Travelers, Trucks, Tulsa, Wagoner, West, Will

Yesterday's Answer: Chevre

To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volume 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45 or 46, order online at www.WonderWordBooks.com. (Contains 43 puzzles.)

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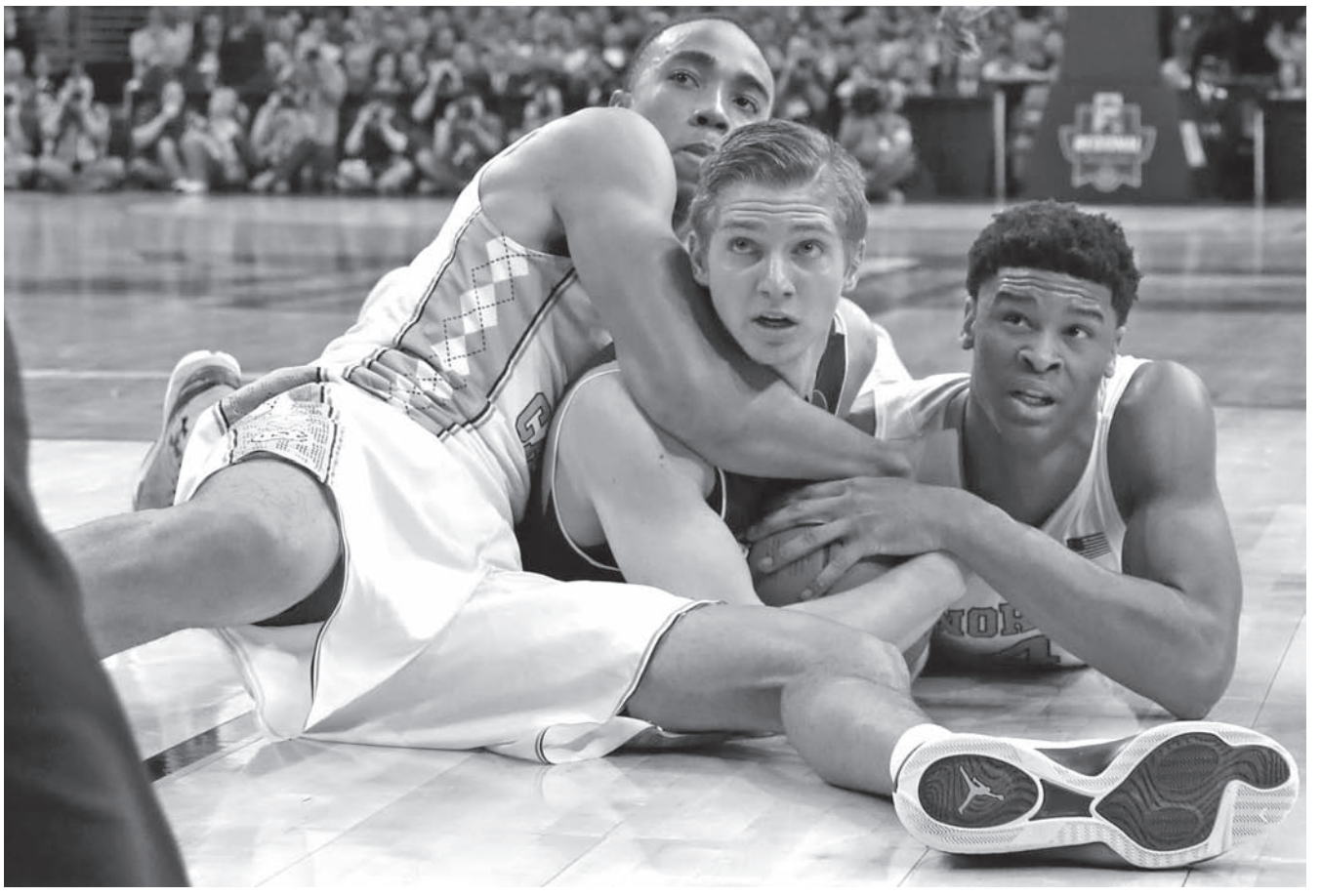
North Carolina heads to Final Four



AP

Notre Dame's Rex Pflueger, center, and North Carolina's Brice Johnson, left, and Isaiah Hicks look for a call from the official after wrestling for a loose ball during the first half of a regional final men's college basketball game in the NCAA Tournament, Sunday, March 27, 2016, in Philadelphia.

PHILADELPHIA (AP)— Roy Williams will take his postgame injuries as long as he and the North Carolina Tar Heels are headed to the Final Four.

The Hall of Fame coach bit his tongue and cut a finger during the net-cutting ceremonies after the Tar Heels beat Notre Dame 88-74 on Sunday night, leaving them as the only No. 1 seed in the Final Four.

"I was screaming. I started to take a step back and I felt like the ladder moved and I grabbed. When I grabbed I grabbed the end of the scissors and it started bleeding," he said.

That's OK since his team will head to Houston.

"Never in my life have I wanted something for someone else as I wanted to get these guys to Houston," he said.

Brice Johnson had 25 points and 12 rebounds as the Tar Heels reached the Final Four for a record 19th time and the first since 2009, when they won the last of their five national championships.

North Carolina (32-6) will face Syracuse, the 10th seed from the Midwest Regional, in another all-Atlantic Coast Conference matchup in the Final Four on Saturday. The Orange beat top-seeded Virginia 68-62.

"He should be used to cutting nets," senior point guard Marcus Paige said of Williams. "He said 'I'll bleed for you guys if you keep playing the way we're playing.' We'll get him patched up."

Sunday's halves were very different. In the first, the teams went shot for shot with both teams shooting over 58 percent and neither leading by more than six points. The second half was run for run and the Tar Heels, taking control of the boards, had the last and biggest one to seize control over the final 10 minutes.

It was Johnson's school-record 23rd double-double of the season.

"It took us four years to do this, but we're finally there," Johnson said of the Final Four.

Paige added 13 points and Joel Berry II had 11 points and eight assists for North Carolina, which has won its four tournament games by an average of 15.4 points. The Tar Heels finished with a 32-15 rebound advantage. They had more offensive rebounds than Notre Dame had on the defensive end.

"We got going a little bit and all of a sudden they made a huge run," Williams said of the second half. "(In a timeout) Marcus said, 'It's a game of runs. They made runs. We're going to make our run.'"

Demetrius Jackson had 26 points and V.J. Beachem had 18 for sixth-seeded Notre Dame (24-12), which has made the Final Four once, in 1978.

"I thought we put ourselves in position," Notre Dame coach Mike Brey said. "We took that one-point lead and they answered it like men. ... I thought the way they answered that run was championship level."

The teams split their games before the tournament, with the Tar Heels winning by 31 in the conference tournament two weeks ago.

The second half Sunday seemed like it was going be similar with North Carolina making a big run.

This time, a 12-0 run gave the Tar Heels a 63-52 lead with 9:19 to play. North Carolina showed its depth during the run with the final eight points coming from reserves Isaiah Hicks and Theo Pinson.

North Carolina opened the second half with an 8-2 run and Kennedy Meeks scoring all the Tar Heels' points down low. Notre Dame answered with 12 straight points. During that run, Johnson was charged with a technical foul for throwing the ball high in the air after he was called for a foul. He apologized after the game.

"That was dumb on my part," Johnson said. "But my teammates did a very good job of playing. They stepped up during a time of need."

After an incredible first half in which both teams played about as well as they could offensively, North Carolina led 43-38.

Both teams shot better than 58 percent from the field and from 3-point range. In one stretch, North Carolina went 4 minutes without missing. It was the third half this tournament that North Carolina shot better than 60 percent. North Carolina finished 61.5 percent for the game (32 for 52).

Notre Dame shot 55.1 percent (27 for 49).

Syracuse 68, Virginia 62

In Chicago, Malachi Richardson smiled as he ran up the court while making circles around his eyes with his hands. Houston was right there in front of him.

From the bubble all the way to the Final Four.

Richardson scored 21 of his 23 points in the second half, and Syracuse extended its improbable run with a 68-62 victory over top-seeded Virginia on Sunday.

The Orange were among the last teams to get into the NCAA Tournament after a rough closing stretch, but slipped in as a 10 seed before storming to its first Final Four since 2013 and No. 6 overall. It comes at the end of a challenging season for coach Jim Boeheim, who was suspended for nine games as the result of an NCAA investigation.

"It was a whole team effort and these guys really deserve it," Boeheim said. "We beat a great basketball team. I've never been prouder in all my 40 years as coach of a basketball team as I am of this team tonight."

Syracuse (23-13), which trailed by 16 at the start of the second half, becomes the first 10 seed to make it to the Final Four and just the fourth double-digit seed to accomplish the feat. It's the lowest seeded team to reach the national semifinals since No. 11 VCU in 2011, according to STATS.

Michael Gbinije and freshman Tyler Lydon each scored 11 points for the Orange, who will face North Carolina on Saturday in Houston in another all-ACC showdown. Tyler Roberson finished with 10 points and eight rebounds.

"We had a lot of doubters," Lydon said. "A lot of people who believed we shouldn't even be in this tournament. I'm sure there are still a lot of people who think that. But we know what we can do as a team and that's all that matters."

London Perrantes scored 15 of his 18 points in the first half for Virginia (29-8), which blew a 16-point lead in the second half. Malcolm Brogdon, the ACC player of the year, had 12 points on 2-of-14 shooting in the final game of his Cavaliers career.

Thompson scores 40, Green with triple-double in Warriors win

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—Klay Thompson scored 40 points in consecutive games for the first time in his career, Draymond Green posted his franchise-best 12th triple-double and the Golden State Warriors beat the Philadelphia 76ers 117-105 on Sunday night.

Stephen Curry had 20 points and eight assists and Green contributed 13 points, 11 rebounds and 11 assists as Golden State (66-7) stayed a game ahead of the pace set by the 1995-96 Bulls' during their record 72-win season. Chicago was 65-8 through 73 games.

Backup big man Marreese Speights added 17 points and seven rebounds in the Warriors' 53rd straight regular-season victory at Oracle Arena and 35th consecutive at home this season.

Carl Landry scored 22 points for the lowly Sixers, who lost their ninth in a row and 22nd in 23 while playing a back-to-back.

Clippers 105, Nuggets 90

In Los Angeles, DeAndre Jordan had 16 points and 16 rebounds and Los Angeles beat Denver to become the fourth Western Conference team to clinch a playoff spot.

Chris Paul added 14 points, six rebounds and nine assists, Jamal Crawford also had 14 points, Jeff Green and Wesley Johnson each added 13, and J.J. Redick had 12. The Clippers had a 25-8 edge in fast-break points.

Jusuf Nurkic had 19 points, and D.J. Augustin added 18 for Denver. Gary Harris finished with 11 points, Joffrey Lauvergne had 10, and Darrell Arthur grabbed 12 rebounds.

Pacers 104, Rockets 101

In Indianapolis, Paul George scored 16 of his 25 points in the first quarter and Indiana overcame 34 points from James Harden to beat Houston.

Monta Ellis had 23 points and Ian Mahinmi tied his career high with 19 points for the Pacers, who have won three of four.

Harden also had eight rebounds and Trevor Ariza had 14 points for the Rockets, who have lost two straight.

Ellis scored the go-ahead basket with 4:46 left to give the Pacers a 96-95 lead and Mahinmi scored back-to-back baskets to put Indiana ahead 100-95.

Kings 133, Mavericks 111

In Sacramento, Rookie Willie Cauley-Stein followed a breakout offensive performance with 21 points and DeMarcus Cousins had 20 points and 12 rebounds to lead Sacramento over Dallas.

The Mavericks have dropped three straight and 10 of 12. They are ninth in the Western Conference and trail Houston by half a game for the final playoff spot.

Cauley-Stein, the sixth overall pick in last year's draft, set a career high with 26 points on Friday night against Phoenix and followed up with just his second 20-plus point game.

Wizards 101, Lakers 88

In Los Angeles, John Wall had 22 points and 13 assists and Marcin Gortat added 16 points and 10 rebounds in Washington's victory over Los Angeles.

Kobe Bryant scored 17 points in 23 minutes for the Lakers, who have lost seven of eight to fall to 15-58. Bryant has four home games remaining in his 20-year NBA career, and the Staples Center crowd serenaded him with cheers and chants while the Lakers listlessly lost again.

Otto Porter Jr. scored 14 points in the Wizards' balanced performance during the opener of a four-game West Coast swing with their playoff hopes in peril. Washington has won six of eight overall, but dropped two straight home games before the trip.

Day gets No. 1 ranking and Match Play title

AP

Jason Day of Australia reacts after sinking a putt to defeat Rory McIlroy of Northern Ireland in the semifinal round at the Dell Match Play Championship golf tournament at Austin Country Club, Sunday, March 27, 2016, in Austin, Texas.

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—Everyone around him was telling Jason Day to withdraw from the Dell Match Play and not risk further injury to his back.

Day knew he was playing well enough to win and wanted to stick it out.

The decision paid off in more ways than he could imagine.

Day returned to No. 1 in the world by making it to Sunday. It felt even sweeter when he beat Rory McIlroy in an epic semifinal, and then beat Louis Oosthuizen in a championship match so one-sided that it might as well have been a victory lap around Austin Country Club.

"I'm glad I didn't listen," Day said. "I wanted to win. I wanted to win so bad that I felt with how I was playing, if I kept playing the way I was going, I would be holding the trophy at the end of the week. And that's what kept me going."

He's taking that confidence to Augusta National next week to start preparations for the Masters, which starts April 7. Coming off a victory last week in the Arnold Palmer Invitational, the 28-year-old Australian has won six times in his last 13 starts dating to the PGA Championship.

"It's been a memorable week, not only to win the Dell Match Play but to get back to No. 1 in the world," Day said.

Day pulled ahead with a 10-foot birdie putt on the par-3 fourth hole, stretched his lead to 3 up at the turn and was relentless with his power and short game the rest of the way. He closed out Oosthuizen with a wedge to 3 feet for a conceded birdie on the 14th hole and a 5-and-4 victory. It was the largest margin for the championship match since it changed to 18 holes in 2011. Tiger Woods beat Stewart Cink, 8 and 7, in 2008 at Dove Mountain in a 36-hole match.

Oosthuizen, who knocked out Jordan Spieth in the fourth round to pave the way for Day's return to No. 1, won the opening hole with a par in the championship match and that was it. His only birdie was an 8-foot putt on No. 5 after Day had stuffed his wedge from the rough into 2 feet.

"A top player these days, he always makes that crucial putt when he needs to," Oosthuizen said. "We've seen a thousand times through Tiger doing it. Jordan does it all the time. And Jason, whenever he needs to make a crucial putt, he makes it. You see him this morning against Rory when he made that putt on 18.

"He's always been a great iron player," he said. "He's always been a great long iron player, and the way he's putting now there's a reason why he's No. 1 in the world."

Day joined Woods and Geoff Ogilvy as the only multiple winners of the Match Play.

None of this looked possible when he winced and grabbed his back on the final hole he played in his 3-and-2 victory over Graeme McDowell on Wednesday. His caddie and coach, Colin Swatton, was standing near the tunnel leading to the first tee about 10 minutes before the match.

"I'm not sure we're going yet," Swatton said.

Day had therapy for an hour before and after each match. His back got progressively better, and so did his game. He played only 101 holes over seven matches - one match was six holes when Paul Casey withdrew Friday with a stomach ailment - and only had one match go the distance.

Rafa Cabrera Bello of Spain, who lost to Oosthuizen in the other semifinal, won the last three holes to beat McIlroy in the consolation match. The real consolation for the Spaniard was moving into the top 50 in the world ranking to earn a trip to the Masters for the first time.

Day might have won this tournament in the morning.

His semifinal match with McIlroy lived up to the hype. The lead changed seven times. They combined for 11 birdies in chilly, blustery conditions.

"I think the morning's round was probably one of the hardest rounds I've had to go through in match play format to try and get through," Day said.

The match turned on the 11th hole when Day got up-and-down for par with a 12-foot putt, while McIlroy missed a 6-foot birdie. Day got up-and-down eight times in his match against McIlroy. On the par-5 12th, McIlroy was first to hit and played well right of the green, away from the water. Day took on the hazard with a 2-iron that cleared the water by a foot and set up a two-putt birdie that gave him the lead for good.

He was 1 up going to the 18th, with thousands of fans rushing ahead to get a view. Day chipped away from the flag to ride the slope, hit it too hard and had a 12-foot putt for par. McIlroy was 6 feet away for par, hopeful of extra hole, until Day poured it in right in the middle.

"I knew if I could give myself a putt, I'd hole it," Day said.

He got up-and-down all eight times against McIlroy, and four out of five times in the afternoon against Oosthuizen. Because that's what No. 1 players do.

Djokovic shakes off spill, beats Sousa at Miami Open

KEY BISCAYNE, Fla. (AP)—Novak Djokovic was chasing a shot in his forehand corner when his left foot gave way and he tumbled to the court, landing on his left side as his racket went flying.

He lost the point, the game and his serve, making it 4-all in the first set. But the collision with the concrete gave his game a needed jolt, and he quickly rose to pull away and beat Joao Sousa 6-4, 6-1 on Sunday in the third round at the Miami Open.

In the first game after he fell, Djokovic cracked several forehands more forceful than what he had previously offered. He broke for a 5-4 lead and lost only 11 points in the final eight games.

Djokovic said he slipped on a wet spot and wasn't concerned that he had hurt himself. But he was worried about beating Sousa.

"That first set went down to a few points," Djokovic said. "After that it was quite a good performance. He made me push myself harder in the second set."

Seeded No. 1, Djokovic is bidding for his sixth Key Biscayne championship, which would tie Andre Agassi's men's record. Serena Williams is seeking her ninth title.

Lucky loser Horacio Zeballos of Argentina joined Djokovic in the round of 16 by saving a match point and beating Fernandez Verdasco 1-6, 6-4, 7-6 (4).

Zeballos' wife, Sofia, is back in Argentina monitoring his matches while awaiting the birth of their child due April 10.

"During the third set, all of a sudden I started thinking, 'I hope she's not nervous,'" Zeballos said in Spanish. "It was crazy for me to be having those thoughts during the match. I am having a great time here, but I also want the baby to be born already and experience that moment of becoming a father. Hoping she can hang on a few more days."

Zeballos said he will pull out of the tournament if his child is born while he's still contending. He lost in qualifying but made the draw when Roger Federer withdrew because of a stomach virus.

On the women's side, two-time champion Victoria Azarenka overcame five double-faults and held every service game to beat qualifier Magda Linette 6-3, 6-0. Azarenka, seeded 13th, moved into the fourth round and is bidding to become only the third woman to win Indian Wells and Miami back to back.

Floridian Madison Keys, seeded No. 22, reached the round of 16 for the first time in seven tournament appearances by beating No. 9 Roberta Vinci 6-4, 6-4. Keys won 19 of 21 points at the net.

In other men's play, No. 7 Tomas Berdych erased all 10 break points he faced and defeated American Steve Johnson 6-3, 6-7 (6), 6-3. Johnson, seeded 31st, fell to 0-13 against top-10 opponents.

No. 14 Dominic Thiem advanced to the fourth round against Djokovic by beating qualifier Yoshihito Nishioka 6-2, 6-2. Djokovic ranks the 22-year-old Thiem as one of his favorite players to watch.

"He's a young player who has a lot of potential and a nice variety in his game," Djokovic said.

It was hot and humid for a second day in a row, and Djokovic was fortunate to play in the evening shadows. He endured plenty of strenuous points in the first set, but Sousa then faded with a flurry of errors.

Seeded 33rd, Sousa has lost 19 matches in a row when playing top-10 opponents.

"Joao really played well in the beginning," Djokovic said. "He wanted to take his chances; there's not much to lose. In these cases it can be dangerous if you're not hitting the ball well, but I rose to the occasion."

With three of the five highest-seeded men already departed, Djokovic is a heavy favorite for another title. He improved to 24-1 this year and 38-5 lifetime at Key Biscayne.

Klinsmann adds pair to US roster for World Cup qualifier

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP)— United States coach Jurgen Klinsmann added midfielders Graham Zusi and Christian Pulisic to the roster ahead of Tuesday's World Cup 2018 qualifying rematch against Guatemala on Tuesday in Columbus, Ohio.

The Americans lost 2-0 at Guatemala on Friday, the first defeat to Los Chapines in 21 games since January 1988.

Zusi, who played in the 2014 World Cup, has three goals in 32 appearances for the national team. His last U.S. game was in the third place match of the 2015 Gold Cup. He plays for Sporting Kansas City of Major League Soccer.

Pulisic is a 17-year-old who makes his debut on the senior national team roster. He represented the U.S. at the 2015 Under-17 World Cup. He plays for Germany's Borussia Dortmund.

Several U.S. players missed the Guatemala match because of injuries. Defender John Brooks (bruised knee) and midfielder Fabian Johnson (groin) returned to their clubs in Germany and defender Matt Besler suffered a concussion in training Thursday and flew to Kansas City on Sunday for further evaluation. Also, midfielder Jermaine Jones is suspended.

AP

United States' Geoff Cameron, left, and Guatemala's Jose Contreras fight for the ball during a 2018 Russia World Cup qualifying soccer match at Mateo Flores Stadium in Guatemala City, Friday, March 25, 2016.

Some home support and self-evaluation could go a long way toward the U.S. getting some measure of redemption after its numbing loss at Guatemala

The rematch is at Mapfre Stadium, known as Crew Stadium until 12 months ago.

By any name it's been a fortress for U.S. soccer where the national team has a 7-0-3 record and outscored its opposition 15-1. The lone goal allowed was against Jamaica on Nov. 14, 2004.

Included among the shutouts are four qualifying matches against Mexico, all 2-0 scores for the famous "Dos a Cero" tag line.

"This is one of the few stadiums in the United States we have an all-pro American crowd. I remember my last time here against Mexico the atmosphere was amazing," midfielder Alejandro Bedoya said of the Sept. 10, 2013, match. "To be able to know we have all the fans behind us gives us a mental edge, so to speak."

The U.S. was lacking that and cohesive play Friday when a poor back pass by Edgar Castillo led to the first goal by Rafael Morales and the second in the 15th was from Carlos Ruiz as he got by the leaky defense.

"There's no doubt we were stunned, for sure, to let in two goals in that manner in the first 15 minutes," Bedoya said. "We put ourselves against the wall. We started the way we wanted to start and then we got a little sloppy. A bad back pass leads to a corner kick and I guess we weren't ready for that.

"We talked about being aggressive on set pieces; 1-0 down then 2-0 down on a collective mistake from the team."

Injuries to Brooks and Besler and Johnson didn't help and Klinsmann's lineup came into question, especially when he substituted midfielder Mix Diskerud at the half because of his poor performance.

There were other quizzical moves by Klinsmann, such as right back DeAndre Yedlin starting on the right wing and using Michael Orozco as the left center back.

U.S. captain Michael Bradley said the players have to be held accountable.

"The game finishes and you're looking at the right balance, looking at the game, looking at ourselves, looking at things that need to be better," he said Sunday before practice at Mapfre Stadium. "We're pretty honest with ourselves. We understand we let ourselves done the other night.

"We have to be ready when the chance comes Tuesday night and step on the field and right from the first whistle play in a way that leaves no doubt as to the result at the end of the game."

Trinidad and Tobago (2-1) leads Group C with seven points. Guatemala (2-0-1) is one point back. The U.S. (1-1-1) has four points and St. Vincent (0-3-0) is last.

There are three matches remaining for each team in the semifinal round with the top two teams advancing the six-nation regional finals.

MGA Festpac golf fundraiser April 16

The Marianas Golf Association is inviting members and avid golfers to join the 1st Festpac Golf Tournament on April 16 on the west course of the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort. This is a fundraising tournament for the benefit of the CNMI delegation to the 12th Festival of Pacific Arts in Guam this May.

The tournament will be using a two-player, best ball format with $180 as registration fee for each pair before April 5 and $200 after April 5. The fees include use of cart, raffle ticket, and meal coupon to any of the vendors participating in the Flame Tree Festival.

The top men's and women's teams in the double Peoria, and in the men's team low gross will get $300 each plus trophy. The second and third placers in each category will receive $200 and $100, plus trophies.

For more information on the golf fundraiser, call Margaret Muna at 322-9982 to 83 or Parker Yobei at the same numbers or at 483-1294.

The Festival of Pacific Arts is set from May 22 to June 4 at the Paseo de Susana Park in Hagatna. More than 2,500 performers, artists, and other cultural practitioners are expected to arrive aside from tourists and visitors from Asia.

American Samoa, Australia, the Cook Islands, Easter Island, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, the State of Hawaii, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Norfolk Island, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and Wallis and Futuna are the Pacific Island countries and territories expected to join the festival. ***(Jon Perez)***

YANKEES

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Comets on top.

The Yankees lost the upper hand after four complete innings as they could not sustain a good start. They got three runs in the first off Tenorio's RBI single and two from the Coments' defensive lapses, but tallied only one run each in the next three innings. Jesse Brel posted an RBI single in the second, Palacios had a sacrifice out in the third, and Alden Ngeskebei reached off a wild pitch in the fourth.

After giving up the lead, the Yankees boosted their chances to regain it with some defensive stops in the fifth inning. Brel, who closed out for the Yankees, struck out Comets leadoff batter E.J. Castro and did the same to fourth batter Ton Ilo for the third out. The Comets were called for the second out when third batter Craig Aguon flied out to third. Roberto batted second for the Comets and advanced on a hit by pitch, but was stranded at second after Brel struck out Castro to end the top of the fifth.

At the bottom of the fifth, Tenorio started things off for the Yankees and had a walk. He then moved to second off a wild pitch from Nakamura and then stole third and home to force the first deadlock in the match.

Lizama also had a walk and advanced to third off the Comets' miscues before being driven home by Palacios's single with no outs. Nakamura then stopped the bleeding after striking out T.J. Chong and the Comets wrapped up the fifth with Roberto catching a fly ball from Perry Celis and teaming up with Aguon for the 4-3 play to leave Ngeskebei stranded at second.

However, the Comets failed to reclaim the driver' seat, as it was the Yankees' turn to play tough defense in the last two innings to keep the precarious lead. A 1-2-3 inning at the top of the sixth helped the Yankees stay on top and they protected the lead in the last inning as the Comets were done after four batters. The first two went back to the dugout as Lisua flied out at centerfield and Jess Kalen grounded out at first. Castro gave the Comets some hope when he made a single, but he was left stranded at first when Brel struck out Roberto.

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impressive 10-0 victory.

Meanwhile, the girls U14 singles finale also went the distance with Conatsu Kaga pulling off an upset against the top-ranked Malika Miyawaki.

Kaga, who is seeded second in the group eked out a 6-4 victory in the opening set, but missed a sweep when Miyawaki came back with a 6-2 triumph in the second. With the match tied, the two CNMI players had to go through the super tiebreaker third set, which turned out to be a nip-and-tuck game before Kaga escaped with an 11-9 win.

The 12-year-old Kaga set up a finals date against Miyawaki after knocking out fellow CNMI player Asia Raulerson in the semifinals, 6-3, 6-1, at the bottom half of the draw. The newly crowned champion also downed Guam's Alyssa Merletti in an earlier game, 6-0, 6-0, to barge into the semis, while Raulerson swept Guam's Alexia Brown, 6-0, 6-4, to arrange a semis duel against Kaga.

Miyawaki, on the other hand, gained a semis entry after eliminating teammate Maria Gregoire, 6-3, 6-2, and Guam's Joycelyn Tenai, 6-1, 6-0. Tenai headed into the Final Four following a 6-4, 6-1 victory over compatriot Kaia Malakooti.

In other results, Raulerson joined Kaga and Miyawaki to the podium after blanking Tenai in the battle for third place, 6-0, 6-0, while Gregoire ruled the consolation draw. Gregoire topped the field after defeating Malakooti, 6-2, 7-5, and Brown, 6-1, 7-5.

The 44th Annual Chamorro Open was part of Oceania Tennis Federation's Junior Circuit (for U14 age group) and awarded ranking point to winners. OTF member-nations host one Junior Circuit competition every year and points are added to determine the rankings of the players in the region at the end of the season.

PEREZ

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resume this weekend at the Oleai Sports Complex with Kanoa facing the Thundercats on Saturday at 4:30pm. This Sunday, the schedule matches are Paire/Inter vs KFAS at 12pm; Shirley's vs Sun Palace at 1:30pm; Tan Holdings vs Matansa at 3pm, and World Resort vs WNT at 4:30pm.

2016 Settsu-Saipan Friendship Basketball Tournament

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Settsu Red Impulse's Chihiro Okumori stops and pops for a shot against Marianas High School defenders during their girls division title game in the 2016 Settsu-Saipan Friendship Basketball Tournament last Saturday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Marianas High School's Mikayla Lopez unloads a jumper against two Mt. Carmel School players.

Marianas High School's Gabrielle Race, second left, loses her balance after tapping the ball away from Settsu's Miku Asai, left.

Mt. Carmel School's Jan Travilla, right, is fouled by Marianas High School's Mikayla Lopez.

Marianas High School's Alexa Vergara is sandwiched by Mt. Carmel School defenders.

Marianas High School's Diane Pablo, right, dribbles past the defense of Mt. Carmel School's Karleen Reyes.

Marianas High School's Negahr Rastguiy goes up for a shot against Mt. Carmel School's Jan Travilla.

Tinian High School players pose with coach Keith Nabors while waiting for their game.

Settsu Red Impulse players celebrate their back-to-back titles.

North Carolina heads to Final Four

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Schorr, Kaga win in Guam

KAGA

SCHORR

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The CNMI's junior tennis players delivered as promised after dominating the U14 singles competition in the 44th Annual Chamorro Open held over the weekend at the Rick Ninete Tennis Center in Guam.

In the boys division, the Commonwealth bets swept the semis berths with Robbie Schorr eventually ruling the seven-player field. Schorr clinched the championship after outclassing Ken Song in the finals, 6-0, 6-4.

Song marched into the finals following a 6-2, 6-0 victory against Sean Lee, while the top-ranked Schorr advanced after blanking Seung Jin Paik, 6-0, 6-0, in the other semis pairing. Schorr automatically moved into the semis after drawing a bye, while Paik earned a Final Four berth after eliminating Guam's Dakota Gibson, 6-1, 6-3, at the upper half of the bracket.

At the lower half, Lee got a free semis pass as Guam's Kian Malakooti was sick and could not play in the weekend tournament, while the second-seeded Song ousted fellow CNMI player Jimin Woo, 6-4, 6-2, to complete the semis cast.

Lee, after bowing to Song, settled for third place after slipping past Paik in the super tiebreaker third set. Lee dropped the first set, 4-6, but remained in contention for the Top 3 finish after recording a 6-3 win in the second set. He then kept his momentum in the extended set en route to an

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Perez, Jambor lead Golden Boot race

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Tan Holdings' Sean Perez and Martin Jambor are tied for the lead in the Golden Boot race in Division 1 of the 2016 M-League.

At the conclusion of Week 7 games, the two Tan Holdings players collected six goals each to pace Paire/Inter Godfather's Ajani Burrel (5) and Chris Nelson (4), Korean Football Association's Brian Lee (4), Paire/Inter's Yogesh Singh (3), and MP United's Sun Bae Park (3).

Burrel joined Nelson at the No.2 spot after scoring Paire/Inter's lone goal in their 1-1 draw against MP United in one of the five matches played in Week 7 (March 20). The league did not play last weekend in observance of Easter Sunday.

Lee added three to make it to the leaderboard as his hat-trick powered KFAS to a 5-2 win against Matansa, while Perez and Jambor's Tan Holdings had a bye in Wee 7.

With Burrel earning another goal and helping Paire/Inter forced a draw against MP United, his squad moved on top of the team standings with its 3-1-1 win-draw-loss record and 10 points. KFAS is at second place with its 3-0-1 slate, followed by MP United (2-2-1), Tan Holdings (2-1-1), and Matansa (0-0-6). Paire/Inter also has the most goals so far with 20, while KFAS and Tan Holdings have 12 each. MP United and Matansa have 11 and four, respectively.

Meanwhile, in Division 2, Sun Palace (4-1-1) gathered the most goals in six games with 16—seven of them came from Golden Boot frontrunner Sang Ho Choi. Choi is ahead of Shirley's' Kazuaki Togo (6), World Resort's Daniel Agulto (4), Thundercats' Juan Peter Oh (4), fellow Sun Palace player Jun Sik Kim (4), CNMI Women's National Team's Jeralyn Castillo (3) and Kanoa's Jae Kwang Oh (3).

Togo registered one goal in their 2-1 victory against Kanoa in Week 7, while Kim's lone goal lifted Sun Palace to a close win against World Resort. Oh also scored in Week 7 for the Thundercats' 1-1 draw against WNT.

With Togo leading Shirley's to victory, his team kept the top spot as the division leader improved to a 5-0-2 record. Sun Palace is in second place with its 4-1-1 card, while World Resort is ranked third with its 3-1-3 slate. The Thundercats (2-2-3), Kanoa (2-1-3), and WNT (1-1-5) are in fourth to sixth place.

Action in the Men's League will

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Yankees nose out Comets, 8-7

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The Yankees edged the Comets, 8-7, during their Big League game in the 2016 Saipan Little League Baseball last Saturday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

First baseman Angel Palacios made the go-ahead hit, as his single drove Peyton Lizama home at the bottom of the fifth inning. Shortstop Roke Tenorio also scored in the crucial inning, as he stole home to tie the match, 7-7.

The Yankees played catch up in the fifth inning after the Comets combined for seven runs in the third and fourth to make up for the latter's silence in the first two innings and grab the driver's seat, 7-6. Franko Nakamura had a two-RBI single at the bottom of the third and also reached home off the Yankees' error, while Austin Roberto nailed an RBI single for the Comets' four runs. Justin Lisua then blasted a two-RBI triple in the fourth, while Nakamura added an RBI single to put the

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO
A Yankees runner prepares to head to home plate during their Big League division game against the Comets last Saturday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.